A HISTORY OF PROPHETS

AND

A MAN OF THE NOBLEST CHARACTER

October 2012

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Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.

www.ourbeacon.com
www.DrShabbir.com
E-mail: drshabbir@bellsouth.net

A HISTORY OF PROPHETS
Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.
Editor: Saleena Karim, UK
Overview: Iftikhar Ahmad, PhD, North Carolina

First published 2012

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ISBN-13: 978-1470018863
ISBN-10: 1470018861
www.OurBeacon.com , www.DrShabbir.com
Ph: 954-746-2115
6440 NW 53 ST
Lauderhill, FL 33319

Editor's Note:

The first edition of this title, written by the renowned scholar of Islam, Dr. Shabbir Ahmed, is being released in October 2012. I feel privileged to be a part of this project, in editing this unique book.

Dr. Ahmed is a prolific writer. He has penned very diverse titles on Islam, Religions, History, Philosophy, Humor and Poetry. He is able to deal with the most difficult of subjects with courage, truth and sensitivity. Dr. Ahmed has beautifully translated the Qur'an into two languages: English and Urdu, and written a marvelous critique on the King James Version of the Bible. He has much to offer readers through his writings, even as he humbly refers to himself as a mere student.

His is an example to be followed, both as a writer and as a wonderful human being.

*Some readers might prefer to start reading this book from Chapter 27b: "A Man Of The Noblest Character".

Saleena Karim,
12 September 2012

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INTRODUCTION

During the last millennium, many scholars have authored stories of Prophets under various captions but, unfortunately, they are more fiction than fact. I am not aware of any history book primarily based on the Authentic Qur'an.

The most popular of these conjecture-based books has been the Arabic "Qasas-ul-Anbia" (Stories of the Prophets) authored by Imam Imaduddin Abul-Fida Hafiz Ismail Ibn Kathir (d.1372 CE). These works are huge volumes comprising of fanciful ideas, very questionable Ahadith (Prophetic traditions), irrationalities and outright fabrications. The authors seldom quote their sources of information. The books have almost nothing to do with the authoritative Qur'an. I read some of these books in my teens and again many years later. They are only a few of the numerous books that thankfully kept me away from the fictitious, counterfeit, "Imamist" Mullah-made N2I – The Number Two Islam.

It is amazing to see that the Glorious Qur'an (610-632) is the first ever book in the world that deals with THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. It narrates the most authentic histories of Prophets and their peoples. Most history books would only give us the dates and events about a nation and shy away from analyzing the reasons behind its rise and fall. The Qur'an does not narrate stories to us like grandma tales. It delves deep into the virtues and vices that lead to their rise and fall. Thus, the stories given in the Qur'an serve for us a definite purpose. They contain lessons for us, being applicable in all times since Divine laws never change. These immutable laws determine the fate of nations and make no exceptions.

[The world had to wait 12 centuries before the German philosopher Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (d.1831) gave lectures on the subject which were later compiled in a book form titled The Philosophy of History.]

God makes His laws in the "World of Command" as He wills, and He implements them in the "World of Creation" (The Universe. 7:54). What a lesson it is for the entire human race! The infallible revelation of God lets humans choose their actions, and thus, determine their destinies. It

tells people clearly the ways to rise as honorable people. It also warns them against what brings about their decline and downfall.

Notes: Please remember that the verses of the Qur'an have been presented randomly in this book. However, at the end, the chronology of events aligns itself almost automatically in the mind.

Secondly, as an example, 17:70, in this book, means Chapter-17, Verse-70 of the Qur'an. As a token of respect, please add a.s. ('alaiyihissalam' Salutes on him) after a Prophet's name. The customary (S) after Prophet Muhammad's name will denote the same. 'Hazrat' would denote 'Honorable'.

What Made Me Write "A History of Prophets"

This book will educate us on how the masses and the leaders must conduct their affairs in order to build and sustain a great nation. Anyone and any nation can learn from what is coming forth in the following pages.

It appears that all the moral vices that individually existed in the declining civilizations, are collectively inflicting the Muslims in particular and the world in general. Can we learn any lessons?
Most scholars of history and religion agree that the Qur'an is the only unadulterated Scripture we have today. A critical examination of history and the internal evidence in various scriptures confirms this fact.

CHAPTER - 1

RISE AND FALL OF NATIONS

As mentioned above, the Qur'an is the first ever book to deal with the 'Philosophy of History'. It makes things simple for us by pointing out certain evils that were most prevalent in a given society, the Prophet assigned to them, his noble efforts to make reforms and the reaction of his people. Finally, it sums up the end results. This is how beautifully and clearly the Qur'an explains for us the Laws of Rise & Fall of Nations. The Book narrates for us the stories of many Prophets and their people, but not for the sake of story-telling. It narrates them for us to draw lessons. This method is a highly effective tool for our understanding of the Divine Law of Requital on a national scale: "As you sow, so shall you reap." In other words, the Qur'an explains for us the Law of Cause and Effect as it applies to nations. If a community defies Divine laws, it will decline. On the other hand, if a community follows Divine laws, it will flourish. These laws never change and they apply to all nations at all times.

Being the most pragmatic Book on earth, the Qur'an puts forth before us very scientific principles to evaluate the truth versus conjecture, even to check the authenticity of the Glorious Book itself:

1. Use of Intellect and Reason instead of blind acceptance of what we hear or see.
2. Results achieved by various Systems in different human societies.
3. An examination of the history of nations to determine the reasons behind their rise and fall.
4. How the Prophets strove to reform their respective societies under Divine guidance.
5. The definition of Truth: When perception matches with reality, it is the Truth.

Prophet Muhammad, being the final link in the noble chain of Prophets, was sent with the last Message to all mankind and for all times to come. However, we must remember that all Prophets were sent with a uniform Message since it was revealed by the same Original Source. God

Almighty revealed His guidance to humans through His chosen Prophets/Messengers. The Qur'an especially focuses on the most prominent good and evil prevalent in a given society in their history. All Prophets did their best to establish Deenillah (Divinely Prescribed System of Life) in their respective communities. ["God's Kingdom on Earth" in Biblical terms]

Rites And Rituals:

We notice that no community destroyed itself for want of worship and rituals.

Invariably, it has been violation of human rights and oppression of the vulnerable that led them to decline and annihilation.
According to a Hadith (a reported saying of Prophet Muhammad), God sent 124,000 Prophets to the world.

The Qur'an reiterates that:

God sent His Messengers to all communities, the primary Message always remaining that the Creator is One and likewise, "Mankind Is One Community". Therefore, all humans are equally worthy of honor.

4:164 (O Prophet) We have told you the stories of some (Messengers) in the Qur'an, of the others We have not.

However, all of them were assigned a Common Mission.

4:165 All these Messengers gave good news, as well as warning, so that humans would not have an argument against God, after the Messengers conveyed to them the guidance. God is Almighty, Wise.

10:47 Every community has had a Messenger.

16:36 We have raised in every community a Messenger.

Q. Why does the Qur'an mention only the Prophets that came to the Middle East?
A. The first addressees of the Qur'an were Arabs and they were familiar with those Prophets, their names, their peoples, and they had heard much folklore about them especially in poetry. The Arab caravans often

traveled through the ruins of ancient Middle-eastern communities. If the Book had narrated the lives of Prophets in other parts of the world, the ignorant Arabs would not be able to connect either with those Prophets or with their peoples. The Message, then, would have been lost in their whims about who was who and where was what.

CHAPTER - 2

The Chain of Prophets:

The Qur'an mentions the following Prophets. Their names are written here in chronological order:

Our Salutes To Them All!

Adam	Aadam
Enoch	Idrees
Noah	Nuh
Eber	Hud
Saleh	Saleh
Abraham	Ibrahim
Lot	Lut
Ishmael	Ismail
Isaac	Ishaq
Jacob	Ya'qoob
Joseph	Yusuf
Job	Ayub
Ezekiel	Zal-Kifl
Jethro	Sho'aib
Moses	Musa
Aaron	Haroon
David	Daud
Solomon	Sulaiman
Elijah	Elias (or Ilyas)
Elisha	Al-Yasa'
Jonah	Yunus
Zacharias	Zakariya
John the Baptist	Yahya
Jesus	'Isa
Muhammad	Muhammad

Prophets Saleh and Muhammad are not named in the current Bible. Prophet Zechariah of the Old Testament belonged to previous generations, and he was, thus, a different person from Prophet Zakariya of the Qur'an. Zakariya is called Zacharias in the New Testament. He was the father of John the Baptist (Yahya). Some of the Tribal Prophets named in the Bible are mentioned in the Qur'an as well.

We note in the Qur'an verse 6:84 that the naming of Prophets begins with Noah. Eighteen Prophets are named in succession in the Qur'an from 6:84-86.

6:84 We gave him (Abraham), Isaac the son, and Jacob the grandson, and We guided them. Before Abraham, We guided Noah and from his descendants, We guided David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. We thus reward the benefactors of humanity.

6:85. And Zacharias, John the Baptist, Jesus and Elijah (Elias); all in the ranks of the righteous who fulfilled the intellectual and moral needs of mankind.

6:86 And Ishmael, Elisha (Al-Yasa'), Jonah (Yunus), and Lot (Lut). To all of them, We gave distinction over people of their times.

Six Cardinal Principles:

1. Mankind is one community.
10:19 All mankind were but one community (and are meant to be so); then they differed. Had it not been for a Word that went forth from your Lord (the Law of Respite), He would have judged their disputes immediately. (2:30, 2:213, 2:256, 11:118, 16:9, 76:2-3)

2. Benefit people: The Real Existence On Earth Is Of The One That Benefits Mankind. (13:17)

3. Reward and Punishment: God is not like emotional human tyrants. He has no interest in punishing people. He runs the Universe with His laws that never change. When people follow His laws, they benefit people and, in the process, help themselves. And when people violate these laws, they suffer individually and collectively. Hence, Reward & Punishment are built in our actions.

4. Give and Grow: (2:129)
Our physical being grows by taking (consuming) and our 'self' grows by giving. The 'self' that has grown (actualized) becomes immortal and lives in paradise. The 'self' that has succumbed to selfish desires, fails to grow, stops progressing and thus abides in the fire of regret (hell), neither living, nor dying.

5. Equal dignity: 17:70 Surely, We have conferred dignity on children of Adam (as a birth right, regardless of where the child is born) …..

6. Human conduct: The only criterion of superiority:
49:13 O Mankind! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may recognize one another. Certainly, the most honored among you in the Sight of God is the one who is best in conduct. God is Knower, Aware.

CHAPTER - 3

ADAM (AADAM)

While "Adam" could be the name of a Prophet, it may also indicate the early humans. Adam may also refer to mankind. At many places in the Qur'an, if we read Adam as Adami (Man), the explanation of those particular verses becomes very simple.

We have already addressed the question why the Qur'an mentions some Prophets that were sent only to the Middle East. The Qur'an does not tell us the location of Adam and his wife called Eve in the Bible probably because they reflect the early Homo sapiens.

The Qur'an does not endorse the Biblical account that God made Adam with clay and brought out Eve from his rib. It confirms the gradual evolution of life from the lowest forms, single life-cells up to the primates and then humans.

The name Eve or 'Hawwa' is not mentioned in the Qur'an. She is called as 'wife of Adam', once again indicating the early Homo sapiens, male and female.

The Qur'an presents their story in such a dramatic style that it feels like a visual tableau. The allegorical manner of expression makes it very interesting and easy for us to understand (2:30 on, 17:61 on, 20:115 on). We see the scenario of God's Court with Adam, Iblis (Satan or Devil) and angels - all being present, and interesting dialogues going on. 'Wahi' (Revelation) means Divine Message through angels to Prophets. It also indicates Divine inspiration to other humans e.g. to the disciples of Jesus (5:111), Zakariya's people (19:11), to the mother of Moses (20:38, 28:7), and even to animals and objects: the sky and cosmic bodies (41:12), to earth (99:5) and to the honeybee (16:68). The 'Wahi' to animals and inanimate objects indicates programming or directing them through their instincts. Angels have been revealing God's messages verbatim on the heart of a Messenger.

2:30 (Now is related to you the creation of Adam or mankind, in allegorical terms; when God decided to create humans who would be

given free will, and supremacy on earth.) Your Sustainer announced His Plan to the angels, “I am about to place on earth a new creation that will have supremacy over it.” They exclaimed, “Will you place on it such creation as will cause disorder therein and shed blood! - Whereas we strive to manifest Your glory (in the Universe)!” He answered, “I know what you do not know.”
[God had programmed the angels (God’s forces in nature) with specific tasks that express the Divine will. He created humans through the process of evolution and granted them the ability to make free choices. They may choose to follow Divine Guidance or deviate from it (33:72). The "angels" were not even remotely aware of any will other than God’s. The Qur’an metaphorically portrays the immense responsibility given to humans in the story of Adam. Free will may be likened to the ‘breathing into humans from the Divine Energy’. The angels wondered if a clash of wills would not result in chaos and bloody disorder on earth, while the angelic role had always been that of striving to manifest the Impeccable glory of their Sustainer and absolute submission to His commands. (15:28-29, 16:49-50). Some of the verses that expound Human Evolution: 6:2, 7:189, 15:26-27, 22:5, 23:12-13, 25:54, 32:7-9, 35:11, 37:11, 71:17]

2:31 And God endowed mankind with the capacity to attain knowledge. Then He showed the angels certain things and said to them, “Tell me if you have the capacity of learning about these, if you are truthful (and better qualified to have supremacy on the planet earth).” [‘Allam-al-Aadam-al-Asma = He endowed mankind with the capacity to attain knowledge]

2:32 They humbly said, “Glorified are You, High above all! We only know what you have taught us (the tasks assigned to us). Most certainly, You, are all Knower, all Wise.”

2:33 Then He said, “O Adam! Show them some of your capacity to attain knowledge.” And when Adam informed them of his ability to learn, He said to the angels, “Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the highs and the lows? And I know what is manifested by your efforts and the potentials that lie dormant within you.”

2:34 And when We said to the angels, “Humble yourselves and be subservient to Adam-mankind, they instantly complied humbling

themselves. But Iblees (Satan) refused through self-glorification, and so became a rejecter of the Divine Command.
[Thus, God endowed mankind with the ability to harness the forces in Nature through science. There is, however, an internal domain He has designed within humans, the 'Nafs' or 'Self'. Call it 'I', 'Self', 'Ego', 'Personality', 'I-am-ness', 'Me'. This has been placed for the humans to exercise free will and achieve personal growth or self-actualization. But this 'self' is vulnerable to the evil prompting of its own intrinsic selfish desire or that of extrinsic sources. In that situation the 'self' rebels against the higher controls of human judgment, and more importantly, against the revealed Moral Values. This rebellious state of the 'self' has the ability to rationalize its desire and emotions through the intellect. And this rebellious state of the 'Ego' is Satan or Iblees. It was this Iblees that refused to humble itself to the higher human controls of judgment and Divine Commands. Incidentally, the Qur'an nowhere mentions a human 'soul', 'spirit' or 'spirituality'. Iblees from 'bals' = Regretful = Deprived = Hopeless = Frustrated = Desperation and regret = Rebellious state of the human 'self' that drifts away from the Divine Commands, but wishes to escape personal responsibility by blaming God for its own misdeeds.
See **7:16**.]

What Was The Tree?

2:35 We told the early humans, Adam and his wife (men and women), "O Mankind! Reside in this land which is Paradise and partake the fruit thereof as you please. But do not go near this branching Tree (of Selfishness). Or, you will become of the wrongdoers."
[If you branch off into casts, sects, and rivalry, you shall replace your Paradise with Hell. 2:213, 4:65 10:19, 20:117-118.]

2:36 But Satan caused them both (men as well as women) to stumble therein and got them out of the happy state they were in. And so We said, "Degraded you are with wedges of discord among yourselves! There shall be for you habitation and livelihood on earth for a while."
[Their straying egos and selfish desires had clashed and led them into dividing among themselves for the pursuit of self-interest. Humanity fell from the height of felicity into contention and rivalry. The plentiful provision of the land that used to be open for all became a matter of private ownership and hoarding. They have since been living in a state

of continuous toil, turmoil and strife. Woman had not misled Man. Both had strayed, both repented, both were forgiven, hence, no Original Sin.]
2:37 (The solution to this catastrophe was beyond human redress.) Then Adam received Words of guidance from his Sustainer and He accepted his repentance. Certainly, He is the Acceptor of repentance, the Most Merciful.
[Adam = Aadam = Man. His wife = Woman. Udma = Ability to live together as a community. Aadam from Udma thus, indicates humankind. The word "Eve" or Hawwa is not mentioned in the Qur'an. She is described with dignity as Mer'a-til-Aadam = Adam's Zaujah = Wife, Consort, Mate of Adam = Mrs. Adam. She did not lead Adam astray. The Qur'an either gently corrects or simply refuses to confirm the errors in other scriptures. It does not repeat the Biblical fallacy of 'Eve' having been created from Adam's rib. She also repented and God treated both of them equally. 7:23-24. Again, Adam and his wife mean humankind, male and female. Taubah = Repentance = Returning to the right path = Realizing one's fault and taking corrective action. 4:17, 4:18, 5:39, 3:89, 6:54, 16:119, 24:5, 27:71.]

2:38 We said, "For now, all of you are degraded to a lower level of existence, out of this state of felicity (Paradise). But, when guidance comes to you from Me, those who will follow My guidance, on them shall be no fear from without, nor shall they have any grief from within."
[Note here the multiple plural 'all of you' confirming that Adam and his wife are allegorical terms for the entire mankind.]

CHAPTER - 4

PROPHET ENOCH (IDREES)

He was one of the most ancient Prophets. Probably he lived in Babylon around 10,000 BC. The Bible describes him as the great grandfather of Noah. Legend has it that he could accurately analyze dreams. The Qur'an says very little about Enoch.

Enoch succeeded in reforming his society.

9:56 And make mention of Enoch in the Book. Surely, he was a man of truth, a Prophet.

19:57 And We raised him to a high station of honor.

CHAPTER - 5

PROPHET NOAH (NUH)

Among the first few Prophets was Hazrat Nuh. His people existed around 10,000 BC in the Valleys of Euphrates and Tigris. The Great Flood had destroyed them. The Flood was not universal, and therefore, humans and animals kept thriving in other parts of the world. There is no evidence of a global destruction during the last 10 millennia.

Class System:

The Qur'an states that Noah's people had made a deplorable division in their society based on wealth and material possessions. The rich elite used to consider the poor as inferior, treated them with contempt, oppressed them and became outraged even if they sat with them.

26:109 (Noah said) "No reward, whatsoever, do I ask for it. My reward rests with none but the Lord of the Worlds.

26:110 So be mindful of God and pay heed to me."

26:111 They answered, "Shall we put our faith in you even though the low class people are following you?"

26:112 He said, "I am not concerned with their professions and what they have been doing before.

26:114 Therefore, I will not drive away the believers.

17:70 Surely, We have conferred dignity on children of Adam (as a birth right, regardless of where the child is born) …..,

49:13 O Mankind! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may recognize one another. Certainly, the most honored among you in the Sight of God is the one who is best in conduct. God is Knower, Aware.

The People of Noah Were Unjustly Proud, Arrogant And Adamant.

71:5 He said, "My Lord! I have been calling unto my people night and day.

71:6 But my call only increases their fleeing.

71:7 When I call unto them that You grant them protection against the detriment of their misdeeds, they thrust their fingers in their ears and veil themselves in their garments. And they persist in this behavior glorifying them in pride. [11:5, 71:10]

71:8 Then I called unto them aloud.

71:9 I addressed them in gatherings and spoke to them individually in private."

Denial: His People Accused Noah Of Lying.

23:24 But the leaders in his community who refused to acknowledge the truth, said, "This is only a man like you who wants to become prominent among you. God would have sent angels if He willed (to convey a message to us). We never heard this from our forefathers.

23:25 He is nothing but a madman, so watch him for a while."

23:26 Said he, "My Lord! Help me, for they accuse me of lying."

10:73 But they persisted in their denial, and We saved Noah and his companions who boarded the ship, and made them successors in the land. And We drowned those who had rejected Our messages. See then what happened to those who had been given sufficient warning. [The deniers thought of the flood warning as a laughing matter. The Tigris and Euphrates flooded with torrential rains]

The Rich Elite Opposed The Divine Message:

71:21 Then Noah said, "My Lord! They have opposed me throughout, for they follow him whose wealth and children have led him increasingly into ruin.

71:22 And they plot tremendous schemes,

Most People Are Victims Of Blind Following:

2:170 When it is said to them, "Follow what God has revealed", they say, "Nay! We will follow the ways of our ancestors." What! Even though their ancestors (and the ancient Imams) were lacking in understanding and were not rightly guided?

6:116 (People will confront you with what the majority is doing.) Now if you pay heed to, or get intimidated by majority of those who live on earth, they will lead you astray from God's way. Most of the people follow nothing but conjecture and they only live by guesswork.

43:23 Likewise, whenever We sent before you a warner to any township, its wealthy ones said, "Behold! We have found our forefathers following a certain religion, and we will follow in their footsteps."

43:24 He said, "What! Even though I bring you better guidance than that you found your ancestors following?" They replied, "We deny that there is any truth in what you (Prophets) are sent with."

The Priesthood, As Always, Profited From The Temples:

71:21 Then Noah said, "My Sustainer! They have opposed me throughout, for they follow him whose wealth and children have led him increasingly into ruin.

71:22 And they plot tremendous schemes,

71:23 And keep telling one another, "Do not abandon your gods! And forsake not Wadd, nor Suw'a, nor Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr." [They had set up idols: Wadd, the god of masculinity. Suw'a, the goddess of feminity. Yaghuth, the lion god of power. Ya'uq, the horse god for travel and battle. Nasr, the eagle god for flying in to 'steal' the news of the heavens.]

71:24 (Noah said, "O God!) They have already misled a great many, therefore, let the wrongdoers increase in straying."

71:25 And so, because of faults upon faults, they were drowned, and then destined to enter the fire. They found out that they had no helpers besides God.

Noah Was Humble But Fearless:

11:31 "I never say to you that I have the treasures of God. Neither do I claim knowledge of what is beyond human perception, nor do I say that I am an angel. I disagree with you that my followers are the people of the lesser status. You claim that God will never give them His bounties but He knows their true merit. I cannot be unjust to them."

11:32 They said, "O Noah! You have disputed with us and disputed a great deal. Now bring upon us what you threaten us with, if you are a man of truth."

11:33 He answered, "God alone brings His requital according to His laws. Once it is upon you, then you can by no means escape."

11:34 Noah said, "My counseling and well-wishing will not help you however much I desire to counsel you if God's law of guidance leaves you astray. He is your Lord, and to Him you must return." [God has appointed laws for guidance: Making good use of our senses and mental faculties.]

11:36 And it was revealed to Noah, "No one of your people will attain faith except the ones who have already believed. Do not be saddened by their deeds."

God Had To Teach Men How To Build A Boat:

11:37 (Noah was commanded), "Build an ark under Our Eyes and according to Our Directions, and do not plead with Me on behalf of the oppressors. Indeed, they are destined to be drowned."

His People Mocked Noah:

11:38 As he was building the ship, and every time the chiefs of his community passed by him, they mocked him. Thereupon he said, "If you are mocking us, we are mocking (your ignorance) ….

11:39 And soon you will know upon whom a humiliating punishment befalls, and upon whom a lasting torment will come."

Relationships Do Not Work – His Son:

11:42 The ship sailed with them amidst huge waves as Noah called his son, who was standing aloof, “O My dear son! Come ride with us; do not be with the disbelievers.”

11:43 He said. "I will cling to a hill-top to protect me from the water.” Noah said, “Nothing can protect anyone today from God’s command except for those who have earned His grace.” A towering wave came between them and his son was among those who drowned.

11:45 Noah called upon his Lord, "My Lord! My son was of my family and Your promise is the True promise and You are the Most Just of judges."

11:46 He (God) said, "O Noah! Your son was not of your family. For, his conduct was unrighteous. So, do not expect from Me of what you have no knowledge. I enlighten you so that you do not remain ignorant.” [The Divine Criterion of relationships is based on Ideology and not on lineage. 49:13]

Wives of Noah, Lot and Pharaoh:

66:10 God cites an example for those who deny the truth. The wife of Noah and the wife of Lot, they were wedded to two of Our righteous servants yet each one betrayed her husband so that neither of them (their husbands) could avail them at all against God. And it was said, “Enter the fire along with others who enter it.”

66:11 And God gives an example for those who have chosen to be graced with belief: The wife of Pharaoh (historically, Aaasia) when she said, “My Sustainer! Build for me a mansion in Paradise, and save me from Pharaoh and his doings, and save me from the oppressors.”

Mount Al-Judi, Ararat:

11:44 And it was said, “O Earth! Swallow your water and, O Sky! Cease!" And the command was fulfilled. The water sank into the earth. And the ark came to rest upon the Mount Al-Judi. And it was said, “Away with these oppressors of the weak.” [The ship came to rest at Judea, in the hills of Ararat, east of the Tigris River. Carbon dating of the remnants of the ark has coincided with 10,000 years.]

11:40 Thus it was until Our command came to pass. Waters gushed forth in torrents over the face of the land. Torrential rain began and the rivers started overflowing. We commanded Noah to take with him livestock, a couple each, and to take his family and followers with him. The rejecters, of course, were not to embark. The community of believers with Noah was small. [11:45, 66:10. Noah's wife and son did not embark.]

11:41 Noah put his trust in God and told his people to embark, "Come on board; in the name of God will be its course and its resting. My Lord is the Provider of shelter, Merciful."

Did Noah Live 950 Years?

Ancient texts and legends sometimes described the age of a great man according to how long his message or influence had lasted.

29:14 We sent Noah to his people and he lived among them a thousand years less fifty (his influence lasted 950 years.) The flood overwhelmed them, for they were violators of human rights.
[Archeologists, Dr. Gilder et al, of Austria discovered the remains of Noah's town in Iraq during the 1950s.]

The Wealthy Exploiters:

29:15 And We saved him and his followers on the ship and We made this a lesson for all people.
Invariably, the first opponents of the Prophets have been wealthy people, the priesthood and great leaders of the nations since the Message struck at their vested interests as they preached the equality of all mankind.

7:60 The chiefs of his people said, "We see you in manifest error."

7:61 Noah said, "O My people! There is no error in me. I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds."

The Consequence Of Denial:

7:64 But they denied him. So, We saved him and those with him in the ship, and drowned those who denied Our revelations. They were a people blind in arrogance.

God says, “We did it” = The communities faced bitter consequences of opposing His laws.

21:76 ….. Noah called on Us, and We saved him, his household and followers from the great distress of persecution.

21:77 We delivered him from the people who rejected Our commands. They were a people given to inequities and oppressing the weak and We caused all of them to drown.

The Only Example:

Prophet Noah’s people seem to be the most ardent opponents and greatest oppressors of the weak. They were frank violators of human rights. This seems to be the only example in the Qur’an where a Prophet becomes so dejected with his non-believing, hostile folk that he prays for their extinction for the reason given below. God had told him that no more people would accept the benevolent message.

71:26 And Noah said, "My Lord! Leave not any of these rejecters to dwell in this valley.

71:27 If you should leave them, they will mislead Your servants and they will only beget division and ingratitude.

71:28 My Lord! Grant me the protection of forgiveness and to my parents and whoever enters my house (the ideology of submission to One God) in faith, and to all the believing men and the believing women. And increase the oppressors in ruin for their violation of human rights."

No Miracles:

Notice that the salvage of Noah and his companions was no miracle. God had revealed to Noah that a tremendous storm was at hand. His companions believed in him, hence, they took preventive action, built an ark and sailed over the flood to safety. The disbelievers, on the other hand, considered all warnings as empty threats. The Qur’an hints that the people of Noah had received other Messengers as well. [26:105]

CHAPTER - 6

PROPHET EBER (HUD)

He was sent to the nation of 'Aad who flourished around 6000 BC. They used to inhabit in and around what is called today Al-Ahqaaf (the land of Sand-dunes), and south to Yemen. Al-Ahqaaf, located in the South-eastern Arabian Peninsula, is the second largest desert in the world after the Sahara of Africa. It is called Ruba' al-Khali = The Empty Quarter.

Men Of Vision:

'Aad's vested interests hindered them from coming to the right path. They were people of vision and high intellect (Mustabsireen). However, unjust systems wither away regardless of how smartly they are run. The capital of 'Aad was the legendary Iram - the Town of Pillars - that lies buried in the sand dunes of the Empty Quarter.

'Aad were a very strong and prosperous nation. They were smart people and using their faculties, they had become quite advanced in science and technology. They were proud of their strength and achievements. However, they arrogantly disregarded Permanent Moral Values, and oppressed the weak.

41:15 As for 'Aad, they behaved in the land arrogantly against all right. And they used to say, "Who is mightier than us in power?" What! Could they not realize that God Who created them, is Mightier than they in power? But they went on denying Our messages, knowingly.

Vain Monuments:

They used to build monuments of vanity. These buildings, mostly towers and minarets, served no purpose, but in their false pride, 'Aad loved to watch and leave impressive landmarks for posterity. They were oblivious to the Divine law that "the real existence on earth is of the one that benefits mankind." (13:17)

26:128 You build on every height monuments of vanity.

26:129 And you make for yourselves mighty castles. Will you thus become immortal?

Mighty Grasp:

For labor, they grasped poor people with a mighty grasp. The nation, as a whole, had become predators taking delight in holding captives and torturing those who came into their custody.

26:130 And you seize people cruelly, without any restraint. [Subjecting them into bondage to build these gorgeous structures for you.]

26:131 Be mindful of God and heed me.

26:132 Be mindful of Him Who helped you with the skills you have.

26:133 He Who has helped you with livestock and human resources.

26:134 And gardens and water springs.

26:135 Surely, I fear for you the requital of an awesome day.

26:136 But they answered, "It is the same for us whether you counsel us or not.

Rationalization:

26:137 This has been our life-style for generations.

26:138 And we will never be doomed."

26:139 So, they rejected him and We destroyed them. Therein is a sign, even though most people are not believers (in the law of Just Recompense).

Idolatry, Blind Following:

'Aad worshiped idols and idolatry always comes with priesthood that exploits people and divides the community into sects. Superstitions and blood sacrifices are integral parts of idolatry. These trends caused multiple social evils in the 'Aad society.

7:65 …. Hud said, "O My people! Serve God by serving His creation. You have no god beside Him. Do you not seek to live upright?"

7:66 The elite among his people who were disbelieving said, "Ah! We see that you are in folly, and we think that you are a liar."

7:67 He said, "O My people! There is no folly in me. I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds.

7:68 I convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I am a sincere and trustworthy adviser to you.

7:69 Why do you wonder that there has come to you a reminder from your Lord through a man from amongst you, to warn you? Recall that He made you successors to Noah's people and gave you abundant power. Keep in mind God's authority and blessings that you may continue to prosper."

7:70 They said, "Have you come to us that we serve God alone and give up what our forefathers worshiped? Bring upon us what you threaten us with, if you are truthful."

Tyranny:

Strangely, they preferred to have tyrants to rule them and obeyed every oppressive, mighty leader.

11:59 Such were 'Aad. They denied the clear messages of their Lord, rebelled against His Messengers and followed the command of every stubborn tyrant.

Bring To Us The Punishment:

46:22 They said, "Have you come to turn us away from our gods?" Bring us, then, what you are threatening us with, if you are of the truthful."

46:23 He said, "That knowledge is with God alone. I convey to you what I have been sent with. But I see that you are a people who prefer to live in the darkness of ignorance."

The Requital:

46:24 And so, when they saw a dense cloud approaching their valleys, they said, "Here is a dense cloud bringing us the needed rain." Nay, this is the very thing you were asking to be hastened – a wind wherein is a grievous torment,

46:25 Bound to destroy everything by its Lord's command. And the morning found them so that nothing could be seen but their empty dwellings. Thus We reward the guilty.

46:26 We had established them in the land better than We ever established you, and We had given them keen faculties of hearing, sight and intellect. But their hearing and sight and intellect did not avail them when they went on knowingly rejecting God's messages. And so, the very thing they used to mock surrounded them.

Hurricane Winds:

7:72 We saved him and those with him by mercy from Us, and cut the root of those who denied Our messages and would not believe.

41:16 And so We sent upon them a raging windstorm for days of misfortune, that We let them taste a punishment of humiliation in the life of this world. But the punishment of the Hereafter is far more humiliating and they will have none to help them.

51:41 And in 'Aad (there are lessons) - When We sent upon them the devastating wind.

51:42 It spared nothing that it blew on and smashed it to dust.
They Were Ill-prepared For Natural Disasters:

54:19 We sent raging winds upon them on a day of relentless misery.

54:20 Tossing people around like empty uprooted palm-trunks.

69:8 Can you see any remnants of them?

89:6 Have you noted how your Lord dealt with 'Aad? [They had refused to listen to their Prophets on equitable treatment with the poor, and violated human rights. 7:65-72]

The City Of Towers:

89:7 Those whose capital was Iram, the city of towers and lofty mansions. [Iram were the generation of Iram son of Sam son of Noah.

The capital of 'Aad bears the same name, Iram, and now lies buried in Al-Ahqaf, the Sand-dunes of the Empty Quarter.]

89:8 The like of which (the towers and castles) were never built in other cities.

No Miracles:

11:53 They said, "O Hud! You have not shown us any miracle. We will not forsake our idols just because you say so. We are not going to believe you."

"Muslims cannot become civilized as long as they believe in miracles." (Sir Syed Ahmed Khan)

"One who believes in miracles is a fool. One who disbelieves in miracles is an infidel." (Talmud)

Read the entire Qur'an and you will not find a single Prophet showing a miracle since miracles can happen only by defying the changeless Divine laws in Nature. And Allah never changes His laws. Any narrative seeming to portray a miracle can be easily understood allegorically. [17:77, 33:62, 35:43, 40:85, 48:23]

Demon-possessed?

11:54 "We think that one of our gods has possessed you like a demon and you have gone crazy." Hud said, "I call God to witness, and you too bear witness that I am absolutely free of your idolatry."

We find plenty of this superstition in the Bible but the Qur'an rejects demon-possession or even their existence.

4:51 Are you not aware of those who, after receiving their share of the Book, believe in *JIBT* and *Taaghoot*? And then these deniers of the truth claim that they are better guided on to the right path than those who have chosen to be graced with belief. [JIBT = False doctrines = 'Occult' sciences, baseless mysteries, magic, future-telling, astrology, clairvoyance, evil eye, good and bad omens, amulets, dream interpretation, and prophecies, palm-reading, soothsaying, superstitions of all kind, jinn or demon-possession of people, exorcism, blowing verses and senseless words on people or in food and drink, counting names on

rosaries. TAAGHOOT = Any force believed to have Divine powers = Evil humans who try to play god with their tyranny = Satan = Those who exploit people as religious leaders = Priests and monks = *Mullahs* and *Sufis* of any religion]

Hud's Determination:

11:55 "Get together, all of you and your gods besides Him. Make a firm decision against me and give me no respite."

Salvation Versus Success:

11:56 "I have put my trust in God, my Sustainer and your Sustainer. There is not a creature in the Universe beyond His firm Control. Indeed, my Sustainer is on the Straight, Balanced Path." [God has designed the Universe so that all things go through evolution. It is an ascending, linear journey that makes progress possible. In the Cyclical hypothesis of the Greek philosophers, things will keep revolving in a circle like oxen endlessly going around water wells without covering any distance. Christian monasticism, Judaic mysticism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism etc define the ultimate objective of humans as freeing themselves of the endless cycle of life i.e. salvation. Therefore, salvation is a negative notion, whereas the Qur'an motivates us to attain eternal success. The dogma of Original Sin in Christianity also involves restoration to a sinless state, once again a negative connotation]

Nations May Get Dominated Or Replaced:

11:57 "You may accept or reject the message that I have clearly conveyed to you. If you turn away, you will decline and fall. Then, My Lord will bring another people in your place. You cannot harm Him at all. My Lord is the Guardian of all things."

11:59 Such were 'Aad. They denied the clear messages of their
Lord, rebelled against His Messengers and followed the command of every stubborn tyrant.

11:60 And they were pursued in this world by Divine rejection, and will be overtaken by it on the Resurrection Day. 'Aad denied their Sustainer! Oh, away with the 'Aad, the people of Hud!

Rites And Rituals Revisited:

It must be emphasized again that no communities declined and fell for performing insufficient rites and rituals. Invariably, it has been injustice, oppression and violation of human rights that led nations to their fall and annihilation. Surah 11 HUD can serve as a good example here. It gives us the history of quite a few communities, their rise, decline and fall for reasons plainly elaborated.

CHAPTER - 7

PROPHET SALEH

The People of Thamud were the successors to 'Aad. Thamud were a strong, prosperous people but they had sharp division between their classes of the rich and poor. Their economy was based on agriculture and herding farm animals. Feudalism was their system of life. The powerful rich elite owned almost all the land and water resources while the poor laborers toiled in their huge farms. The feudal lords treated the laboring farmers with contempt and deprived them and their livestock of natural resources like water and vegetation.

Their Remnants, Explorers and Satellites:

The Tribe of Thamud had descended from 'Aad and is, therefore, frequently referred to in history and ancient Arabic poetry as 'Aad-e-thaani (Second 'Aad). Inscriptions and records dating as far back as 715 BC refer to them as Thamudenes and Thamudaei (writings of Aristo, Ptolemy, Pliny). Thamud had vanished about 2,000 years before these visitors. Rock inscriptions, dwellings and tombs decorated with animal sculptures still exist in the valley of Al-Hijr from Northern Hijaz to Syria. Recently, satellite images have discovered their castles built within the drilled mountains of Yemen as well. Numerous of those houses are in excellent condition even today. The pictures show their incredibly impressive construction and design.

The Qur'an hints that slavery was rampant among the nation. The rich and influential people used tremendous amount of manpower to drill mountains and carve their houses in them. Probably, they were very fearful of natural disasters like raging winds, volcanoes and floods.

The Dialogue:

The following dialogue and the next between Prophet Saleh and his people once again demonstrates that all Messengers of God came to their communities with a uniform Message: Just as the Creator is One, Mankind is One Community. The One True God is not a Tribal God. He is the Lord of the worlds and the Lord of mankind.

26:141 Thamud also denied the Messengers.

26:142 When their brother Saleh said to them, "Will you not seek to live upright?

26:143 Truly, I am a Messenger to you, worthy of your trust.

26:144 Be mindful of God and heed me.

No Reward:

26:145 I ask you no reward, whatsoever, for it. My reward rests with none but the Lord of the Worlds.

26:146 (Do you think that) you will continue to live in security (with your unjust system) forever?

They Had An Earthly Paradise.

26:147 In gardens and water springs.

26:148 And fields, and fruitful palm trees.

26:149 And that you will always skillfully carve out of the mountains luxurious mansions?

26:150 Be mindful of God and heed me.

Do Not Obey The Unjust:

26:151 And do not obey the command of those who trespass the bounds of justice and equity.

26:152 Those who spread corruption in the land, and reform not."

The Blame Game:

26:153 But they replied, "You are but one of the bewitched.

26:154 You are just a mortal like us. So bring us a miracle if you are a man of truth."

26:155 He, (ignoring their demand for a miracle) said, "This she-camel (representing the weak and the poor) has the right to drink, just as you have the right to water (your flocks) at the time of watering.

The She-camel, A Symbol Of Compliance:

7:73 The people of Thamud were successors to ‘Aad. To them We sent their brother, Saleh. He said, “O My people! Serve God. You have no other god but He. The clear truth has come to you from your Lord. This is the she-camel of God, a token for your obedience. So let her feed in God’s earth and harm her not lest painful torment seize you.” [The feudal lords controlled land, crop, oases and water resources, and the weak were suffering. It appears that Prophet Saleh had reached an agreement with them and assigned a she-camel as a symbol of their reformation.]

Another Dialogue With Saleh:

7:74 Saleh said, “Remember how He made you inherit the land after ‘Aad and established you therein. You build castles in the valleys and carve out homes in the mountains. So, remember God’s bounties and do not spread corruption in the land.”

7:75 Their leaders said to the believers, "How do you know that Saleh is sent from his Lord?" They responded, "We believe in the message he has brought.” [The bearer of such a sublime message cannot be a liar.]

7:76 (The arrogant leaders and the feudal lords could see their personal interests getting hit.) The arrogant ones said to the believers, “We reject what you believe in.”

7:77 They killed the she-camel, rebelled against their Lord’s command and challenged, “O Saleh! Bring the doom you threaten us with, if you are truly a Messenger.”

The Earthquake:

7:78 (In their life of luxury, like other strong nations, they felt invincible.) The destruction came from under their feet. A powerful earthquake annihilated them, leaving them lifeless in their homes.

7:79 Saleh was grieved that his people disregarded the message of his Lord. He moved away from the township saying to himself, "O My people! I gave my Lord's message to you, and advised you sincerely, but you never liked good advisers."

Important Observations:

One - Rituals & Prayers: Reading through the entire Qur'an, we find that no nation ever suffered harm, destruction or annihilation for a deficiency of rituals, worship or prayers. Invariably, the reason of decline and fall of nations has been moral vices, particularly violation of human rights.

14:8 And Moses said, "If you deny the truth and show ingratitude, you and all on earth together, know that God is absolutely Free of want, Worthy of all praise." [He is in no need of your worship]

Two - No Miracles: If the Divine laws in Nature were to keep changing, no science would have taken off the ground. Since miracles would call for supernatural phenomena and thus defy those laws, there is no such thing as miracle. Proper understanding of the Qur'an reveals that all Prophets refused to give in to the demands of the opponents to show them miracles. God does not will people to believe under compulsion, coercion or by stunning their intellect through supernatural phenomena. Therefore, all Prophets appealed to reason and kept reiterating that they were only mortals like them who were conveying to them God's messages. The universe in itself is a self-evident miracle of God if people would use their sense. Taken literally, miracles or supernatural phenomena would defy the Changeless Divine Laws. God makes His laws in the World of Command (Amr) as He wills. Then, He implements them in the World of Creation (Khalq) i.e. the Universe and never changes them. If these laws were to keep changing, no science would be possible. Just one example should suffice. If the force of gravity pulled objects one day and repelled them another day, our existence on earth would become impossible. Imagine people floating in the air today and falling down from great heights tomorrow.

7:54 Your Sustainer is God …. To Him belongs the World of Creation, and to Him belongs the World of Command. …

[Again, in the World of Command He makes laws as He wills. Then He implements these laws in the World of Creation - the Universe. And then He neither changes them, nor makes any exceptions. His Rule is the Rule of law and not of haphazard tantrums. 7:54, 17:77, 33:38, 33:62, 35:43, 40:85, 48:23]

Three – Diagnosis & Treatment: History of Prophets in the Qur'an tells us about every single vice a society may have today or ever. Nothing seems to be left out. In addition, we also learn how God's Messengers strove to reform their respective communities. This treasure of knowledge can serve as a beacon of light for people and their leaders anywhere in the world. Through their histories, we get the diagnosis and treatment of all evils that a community might be suffering from.

Four – Biblical Inaccuracies: Due to repeated loss of the Bible, as during the Babylonian and Roman invasion of Jerusalem and Israel, the book has lost much of its accuracy. The Qur'an very competently and rationally heals the resulting errors. For details, the reader is referred to my book "Thus Speaks The Bible".

Saleh Must Have Been A Brilliant Man:

11:61 And to the tribe of Thamud, We sent their brother Saleh. He said, "O My people! Serve God. You have no one worthy of obedience but He. He initiated you from the earth and made you thrive thereon. Come to His protecting forgiveness, turn to Him in repentance mending your ways. My Lord is ever-Near, Responsive."

11:62 They said, "O Saleh! We had placed great hopes in you before this! But now you are telling us to move away from worshiping what our forefathers worshiped. Now we are in grave doubt, amounting to suspicion about the meaning of your call to us."

11:63 He said, "O My people! Do you really see and think? What if I have clear evidence of the truth from my Lord, and mercy from Him? Then, who can help me against God if I disobey Him? You can only push me into ruin.

11:64 (The feudal lords had been depriving the poor of using the land and its natural resources of water and vegetation). Saleh said, "O My

people! This she-camel belonging to God shall be a token for you. So leave her alone to graze in the land belonging to God. Do her no harm, lest speedy punishment befall you."

This verse along with 55:10 pronounces one of the most revolutionary concepts of the Qur'an. God alone owns the land so it must be left open for all His creation as a means of sustenance. So, all landlord-ship is contrary to the Divine Ordinance. In the Divine System, the Central Authority will see to it that any piece of land will be for those who toil in it and give God His Right, the poor-due. [6:141]

Naaqatillah and Al-Ardhu-Lillah: The earth belongs to God just as the she-camel belonged to Him. So, feudalism violates Divine laws.
Baatin-e Al-Ardhu Lillah Zaahir Ast -- Har Keh Ou Zaahir Na Beenad Kafir Ast
[The meaning of "Land belongs to God" is obvious. Anyone who does not see it obvious, is an infidel – Sir Iqbal]

91:13 Although God's Messenger had told them, "It is a she-camel belonging to God, so let her drink!"

Thamud Broke The Agreement:

11:65 But they hamstrung her. Thereupon Saleh said to his people, "Only for three more days shall you enjoy life in your homes. This is a promise that cannot be false." ['Aqarooha = They hamstrung her = They killed her]

11:66 And so, when Our command came to pass, by Our grace We saved Saleh and the believers with him from the humiliating annihilation of the day. Surely, your Lord, He alone is Strong, Almighty.

An Earthquake And The Volcano:

11:67 (Saleh and His followers moved out of the town while the disbelievers stayed back with their mockery). And a tremendous blast overtook the oppressors, and then they lay lifeless, in their very homes, on the ground.

11:68 As if they had never lived there. Thamud had denied their Lord. Oh, away with the Thamud!

They Chose The Most Wicked Man:

91:12 Indeed, the most forward among them was picked up for defiance.

They Had Taken The Warnings As Empty Threats:

91:15 None of them had any fear of what might befall them.

CHAPTER - 8

PROPHET ABRAHAM (IBRAHIM)

THE LEADER OF MANKIND

Prophet Abraham, the “Patriarch of Faith” lived in Ur, Babylon, Can’an and Makkah around 2000 BC.

2:124 And remember when his Lord had Abraham go through trying circumstances with His commands, and he fulfilled them. Then He said, “I have appointed you an exemplary leader for all mankind.” He asked, “And of my offspring (will there be exemplary leaders as well)?” He replied, “My Covenant does not include the wrongdoers.” [Being the offspring of a great man avails none. Trying circumstances: Abraham stood up to the formidable challenge of a mighty priesthood, rampant idolatry and the tyrannical autocracy of King Nimrod Shaddad in Ur, Mesopotamia. Imam = Plumb line that ensures the verticality of a wall = An outstanding leader]

2:125 Remember, We appointed the House (Ka’bah) a means to achieve unity among all mankind, and thus, a source of peace and security. So, attain the stature of Abraham recalling his firm stand (for Monotheism) and closely follow the Divine Commands. We did take a Covenant from Abraham and Ishmael, “Keep My House clean of all falsehood for those who rally around it and those who strive hard for the noble objectives, and for those who submit in humility to the Divine Commands." [Al-Bait = The House = Ka’bah = The Symbolic House of God in Makkah = The meeting point for all mankind = The Source of peace, security and unity for all humanity. 2:142-143, 3:96, 5:97, 14:35, 22:25. Musalla = The ways to obey God. Maqam-e-Ibrahim = The stature of Abraham = The stand he took. Taifa = Those who might be diverse in color and geography but united in Ideology. Taaif = Watchman = Custodian = One who stands guard. Taifeen = Caretakers of humanity = Guardians of human rights. ‘Akafa = To prevent schism and discord = Set things right. 'Aakifeen = Those who strive for a noble objective = Those who prevent divisions = Who set things right.

14:36 “My Lord! They (the keepers of these idols and temples) mislead a great many people. Whoever follows me, will be of me. Any who rebels against me, well, You are Forgiving, Merciful.” [11:15. Relationships would stand on Ideology. 2:124, 60:4]

14:37 “Our Lord! I have settled some of my family in this barren valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House. Our Lord! They are here to establish the Divine System. Give them the nobility of character so that the hearts of people incline toward them. Provide for them with your blessings so that they may focus on their Mission. Make their efforts fruitful and enable them to show gratitude by sharing the bounties with others.”

14:39 “All praise to God Who has given me sons like Ishmael and Isaac in later age! My Lord is the Hearer of prayer.”

14:40 “My Lord! Enable me and my children to establish the Divine System. Our Lord! Accept my prayer.”

Ishmael Was The Ancestor Of The Arabs:

Ishmael resided permanently in Makkah, while his father kept traveling between Hagar (Haajirah) in Makkah and Sarah in Can’aan (Palestine). Ishmael married a woman from the Qahtani Tribe of Jurham and became the ancestor of Musta Ribah (Arabianized tribes or the early Arabs). So the Arabs are, interestingly, descendants of Ishmael and a Qahtani Jurham mother from the Arabian Peninsula. They had twelve sons in their long and happy married life. The Qahtanis are still abundantly found in Arabia. They were a wandering tribe in the peninsula and they had settled in Makkah before Ishmael, because of the (contrary to popular legend) pre-existing well of Zam-Zam. The “Wilderness of Beer-Sheba” of Genesis 21:14, embraces the Southern Palestine, and Hijaz (the mid-western Arabia). Therefore, the Bible and the Qur’an are in agreement concerning where Ishmael and his mother Hagar had settled after moving from Can’aan.

A Glimpse About Hagar And Ishmael In The Bible:

Genesis 17:20 - As for Ishmael, I have heard you (O Abraham); behold, I will bless him and make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Genesis 21:17 - And God heard the voice of the lad (Ishmael); and the angel of God called to Hagar from the Heights, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not; for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him fast with your hand; for I will make him a great nation.

Genesis 21:20 - And God was with the lad, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran (Faran, Makkah).

Qur'an, The First Scripture To Arabs:

This history also explains why the Qur'an asserts that the Arabs had not received any scripture before the Qur'an. The Arabs, being the descendants of Ishmael, could only become a community long after Ishmael had passed on and when his progeny had multiplied with time. Note: The Valley was a barren land, but Abraham settled his family in the town of Makkah, near the soon to be built Ka'bah. So, contrary to popular legends, Abraham never left his family in the isolation of a desert.]

7:158 …. So, believe in God and His Messenger, the Prophet to whose people no scripture was given before ….

2:126 And Abraham prayed, "My Lord! Make this land a haven of peace and security, and provide its residents with plentiful sustenance; those who believe in God and the Last Day." He answered, "I will also provide for those who disbelieve and let them enjoy for a short while, then I will commit them to the suffering of the fire, a miserable destiny!" [14:37, 17:18-20, 22:25, 95:3]

2:127 As Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House they prayed earnestly, "Our Lord! Accept this (service) from us. You are the Hearer, Knower."

2:128 "Our Lord! Make us submissive to You and of our descendants let there be a community submissive to You. Show us the best ways to serve You and enable us to make amends. You are the Absolver of imperfections, the Merciful. [2:186, 2:286]

2:129 "Our Lord! Raise from among them a Messenger who will convey Your messages to them and instruct them in the scripture (by personal example) and the wisdom (behind each command). And also teach them how to grow in goodness. You are Almighty, the Wise."

Elect Of God:

2:130 Who would abandon the Creed of Abraham except the one who ridicules his own 'self' with folly? We elected him in this world for (his outstanding qualities stated in this Book). And in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have actualized their 'self'.

An Humble Submitter:

2:131 When his Lord said to him, "Submit (your will) to Me!" - He said, "I submit to the Lord of the Worlds."

His Will:

2:132 This very legacy Abraham left to his children, and so did Jacob, saying, "O My children! Indeed, God has chosen for you the Way of Life. Therefore, let not death overtake you except that you are submitters (Muslim)."
[Deen = Divinely Prescribed System of Life = Al-Islam. It has more to do with the collective life of humans and the science of sociology. It concerns itself with people living in this world collectively in peace according to a Code of permanent values that ensures success in both lives. Religion (Mazhab) is more of a generic term signifying a creed involving certain rites and rituals and seeking individual salvation. Islam being a Collective System of Life is, in fact, a challenge to religion.]

A Man of Truth:

19:41 Also mention in the Book (the story of) Abraham. Indeed, he was a man of truth, a Prophet.

19:42 He even confronted his father (Azar), "O My father! Why do you worship what hears not and sees not and can be of no avail to you?"
[Azar (Terah) was the chief priest of King Nimrod Shaddad of Babylon and Ninevah, and he was a master sculptor.]

19:43 "O My father! There has come to me of knowledge that did not come to you. Follow me then, and I will lead you on to a perfect way."

19:44 "O My father! Do not serve the Satan, for Satan (selfish desire) is a rebel against the Beneficent."

19:45 "O My father! I am afraid that a retribution from the Beneficent might overtake you, and you be counted among the friends of Satan."

19:46 He answered, "Do you dislike my gods, O Abraham? If you cease not, I will certainly get you stoned to death! Now get away from me for good!" [The Chief Priest, Azar, had the power to declare anyone an apostate and condemn him to be stoned to death.]

19:47 Abraham said, "Peace be upon you! I will pray to my Lord for your forgiveness. For, He is ever Kind to me."

19:48 "I am withdrawing from you all, and from whatever you invoke besides God. I will call on my Lord. By imploring my Lord alone, I cannot go wrong."

The Sacred House – Ka'bah: The Center For All Mankind

22:26 Behold! We pointed the site of the Sacred House, Ka'bah, to Abraham, saying, "Associate none with Me, and keep My House clean of human dogmas for those whose Divine Ideology of Monotheism will revolve around this Center for all mankind. Train the visitors to stand up for truth, and bow in full submission before Divine commands."
Pilgrimage – Hajj for all mankind:

3:97 Therein are clear messages (to achieve that coveted goal and recall) how Abraham once took his stand (against all divisions of humanity and was granted the leadership of all mankind 2:124-125). Those who enter the System symbolized thereby shall find inner peace and external security. Pilgrimage to this House is a duty all mankind owe to God, those who have the circumstantial means to undertake the visit. One who denies this command should know that God is Absolutely Independent of all His creation.

22:27 "And announce to mankind the duty of Pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot, and on every kind of fast mount, coming from every far away point on earth."

22:28 So that they might see with their own eyes and experience what benefits the Divine System holds for them (in addition to uniting them in the common bond of humanity). And they shall commemorate God's Name collectively during the specified days of Hajj; and over the livestock He has bestowed upon them. Then host one another with the livestock (to make the Congregation self-sufficient in the food resources). Eat and feed the distressed poor (regardless of whether they are in the congregation or not).

An Important Note: Most people think that non-Muslims are forbidden from coming to Makkah and Madinah but this belief is contrary to the Qur'an. The idolaters are forbidden only to 'ya'mur' or administer the Masjid for obvious ideological reasons. In fact, they must be allowed to come and witness the benefits of the unity of mankind.

Cleaning Out Moral Vices:

22:29 As they host one another, they shall consult to clean out their societies of moral vices, and design ways to fulfill their obligations. Then they shall walk around the Ancient House in their resolve.

22:30 Thus it is the purpose of Hajj. Whoever will honor these Divine directives and limitations, it will be good for him in the Sight of his Lord. The livestock here is lawful food for you except for those already prohibited. You shall avoid confounding truth with falsehood, idol worship in any form, and abstain from bearing false witness. Avoid all things that bring your progress to a standstill. [2:173, 5:3, 6:145, 16:115. Rijs, Awthan, Zoor encompass all the stated meanings.]

22:31 Turn to God alone, associating none with Him. For whoever ascribes partners to God, it is as if he has fallen from the sky and the birds snatch him or the wind blows him to far-off places.

3:95 Say, "God has declared the truth. Follow, then, the Creed of Abraham, the upright who shunned all falsehood. He was not of those who choose authorities besides God."

3:96 He erected the First House (Sanctuary) appointed for all mankind, at the blessed Bakkah. It is to serve as a beacon of light for all humanity (in order to regain their lost unity).
[2:125. Bakkah came to be known as Makkah later. In the ancient Arabic dialect 'b' was interchangeable with 'm'.]

The Leader Of Mankind:

3:97 Therein are clear messages (to achieve that coveted goal and recall) how Abraham once took his stand (against all divisions of humanity and was granted the leadership of all mankind 2:124-125). Those who enter the System symbolized thereby shall find inner peace and external security. Pilgrimage to this House is a duty all mankind owe to God, those who have the circumstantial means to undertake the visit. One who denies this command should know that God is Absolutely Independent of all His creation. [Pilgrimage = Joining the Hajj Convention. Mankind can realize the blessings of unity by rallying around this Divinely appointed Center of Ideology. 22:25-28. The idolaters are forbidden only to 'ya'mur' or administer the Masjid for obvious ideological reasons. 9:17-18]

The Chain Of Prophets:

3:33 The Qur'an is the Final Perfected guidance for all humanity. But God has elected Messengers before to convey His messages.) Indeed, God did choose Adam and Noah (Nooh), and the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above all people of their times. [Adam = Aadam = The human ancestor = The first Homo sapiens = Allegorically, Adami, the first humans = Mankind = Possibly a prominent early human = Perhaps a Prophet, but the chain of Prophets begins with Noah. See 4:163, 6:80-85]

3:34 In one lineage. God is the Hearer, Knower of all things and events.
[Muhammad belongs to the progeny of Abraham through his elder son Ishmael and Jesus belongs to it through his younger son Isaac.]

The Creed of Abraham:

16:120 Abraham was virtue personified, devoted in his commitment to God, turning away from all that is false. He upheld strict Monotheism

and never indulged in idolatry of any kind. ['Ummah' = Virtue personified = His impact on humanity was that of a whole community.]

16:121 He was always grateful for the blessings granted by Him Who had elected him and guided him on to straight path.

16:122 We gave him good reward in the world. And in the Hereafter he shall be among those who actualized their human potentials.

16:123 We have revealed to you this message (O Prophet), "Follow the creed of Abraham who turned away from all that is false." He was, by no means, of the idolaters.

Abraham Was Blessed With Great Qualities:

19:49 So, when he abandoned them and their deities besides God, We bestowed upon him a son Isaac and a grandson Jacob. And each of them We made a Prophet. [Abraham had moved from Mesopotamia to Syria-Can'aan.]

19:50 We showered them with Our grace and We granted them a truly high renown.

2:258 Think of the one who adamantly argued with Abraham about his Lord because God had given him power. Abraham said to him, "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He answered, "I give life and cause death." Abraham said, "God makes the sun rise from the East; make it rise from the West." Thereupon the rejecter of the truth remained dumbfounded. God does not guide people who choose to do wrong. [Nimrod, King of Babylon, Abraham's contemporary and staunch enemy, used to proclaim divinity. Being a tyrant he could impose or revoke death penalty.]

2:259 (Later on came another king in the dynasty of Nimrods, his name, Nebuchadnezzar, 630-562 BC. He invaded Jerusalem, oppressed Israelites and enslaved them. One hundred years of tribulation passed before King Cyrus of Persia liberated them and reinstated them back in Jerusalem. This history bears a lesson for posterity.) The similitude of this history is that someone passes by the ruins of a town and wonders if that town could ever come back to life again, and God causes him to die

for a hundred years and then revives him. He thinks it was only a matter of a day or a part of it. He even finds his food, drink, and donkey standing beside him. God creates you in the wombs of your mothers, in bone and flesh. And when the matter became clear to him, he said, "I know now that God is Able to do all things. God is the all Powerful Designer of His laws and He does all things in the Universe in duly appointed measure."

2:260 [Abraham wanted to understand the law of revival of nations.] "O My Lord! Show me how You revive dead nations." God said, "Do you believe not?" Abraham said, "Surely, I do but only to satisfy my heart (how I will revive my living dead people). God said, "Take four birds and train them with affection to you, and then leave them apart on separate hilltops." Then call them; they will come in quickly. Then know that God is Almighty, Wise. [At one call of Abraham the birds came flying back to him. This is how mankind can be brought to the Truth with decent admonition and training, giving them a new life.]

Friend of God:

4:125 Who has a better Deen (System of Life) than the one who submits completely to God, and thus becomes a benefactor of humanity? Such a person is following the way of Abraham the Upright whom God chose for friend.

Abraham's Prayers:

26:83 "My Lord! Grant me wisdom and good judgment, and unite me with the righteous. [Saaliheen = Those who have attained self-actualization = Those who set things right = Help augment the human potential = Serve the community = Remove any deficiencies = Correct wrong = Fulfill other's needs = Do acts of social welfare = The righteous]

26:84 Enable me to set a good example for the future generations and leave an honorable mention among them.

26:85 And make me worthy of the Garden of bliss.

26:86 And forgive my father (by showing him the right path). He is of those who strayed.

26:87 And let me not be disgraced on the Day when they are raised.

26.88 The Day when wealth and children will avail none.

26:89 But only he will prosper who brings to God a noble heart."

Idol Smashing:

21:51 Long before, We showed Abraham his direction and We were Aware of him,

21:52 When he said to his father and his people, "What are these images and statues that you sit around worshiping?"

21:53 They responded, "We found our ancestors worshipers of them."

21:54 He said, "You and your ancestors have surely been in plain error."
21:55 They said, "Are you telling us some serious truth or are you one of those jesters?"

21:56 He said, "Nay, your Lord is the Sustainer of the heavens and the earth, He Who brought them into being. I am of those who bear witness before you (based on reason)."

21:57 "And by God, I have planned to deal with your idols when you turn back and leave the temple."

21:58 Then he broke them to pieces except the big one, so that they might turn to it. [The idea was to simply show the helplessness of idols]

21:59 They said, "Who has done this to our gods? He must be of the wrongdoers."

21:60 Some said, "We heard a youth talking about them; he is called Abraham."

21:61 The custodians of the temple conferred and said, "Then bring him before the people's eyes, so that they might bear witness."

21:62 (And when he came) They asked, "Is it you who has done this to our gods, O Abraham?"

21:63 (Abraham grabbed the opportunity of driving the point home), "Whoever did it, did it. This is their chief. Ask them if they speak."

21:64 They were taken aback, withdrew, thought and blamed one another, “Surely, you yourselves are the wrongdoers.”

21:65 They were utterly confounded in shame, lowered their heads and said to Abraham, "You know that they do not speak."

21:66 Abraham said, "Do you then worship instead of God what cannot benefit you nor harm you?"

21:67 “Shame on you and on that you worship instead of God. Will you, then, use your sense?"

Abraham In Fire:

21:68 The priesthood of the temple instigated the masses, "Burn him alive and uphold your gods if you are going to take any action."

21:69 But We said, "O fire! Be cool and security for Abraham!" [The fire of their rage cooled down.]

21:70 And whereas they schemed against him, We made them the true losers. [They failed to value a man of his stature.]

Abraham Migrates to Syria:

21:71 We rescued Abraham and (his nephew companion) Lot to the land that We blessed for all people. [They migrated from their homeland of Ur in Mesopotamia, today's Iraq, to Syria-Can’aan that was blessed with a long chain of Prophets.]

21:72 We bestowed upon Abraham, a son Isaac and a grandson Jacob. We made all of them great benefactors of humanity as they addressed the inequities in human thought and behavior.

29:26 And Lot believed in him (Abraham) all along. Abraham said, “I will quit this domain of evil and migrate for the sake of my Lord, for He is Exalted in Might, and Wise." [37:99. From the Kingdom of Nimrod Shaddad, Abraham emigrated to Syria-Can’aan. Lot, Abraham’s nephew, was later commissioned as a Prophet and sent to Sodom and Gomorrah by the Dead Sea.]

The Legendary Sacrifice – What Was It?

37:99 And he said, “I am going to my Lord Who will guide me best.

37:100 (Abraham migrated to Syria and prayed), “My Lord! Grant me a healthy child.”

37:101 So We gave him the good news of a clement son (Ishmael).

37:102 And when he was old enough to strive along with him, Abraham said, “O My dear son! I have a vision that I must give you to a life of test and tribulation for a Noble cause. So look, what do you think?” He said, “O My father! Do what you are commanded. God willing, you will find me of the steadfast.” [Zibh and Zabh = Sacrifice = Disregard comfort for a Noble cause.]

37:103 As both of them had surrendered themselves (to God), he made Ishmael prostrate on his forehead in gratitude. [Contrary to popular tradition, Abraham never envisioned or intended to slaughter his son. God does not play games with His servants.]

37:104 We called unto him, “O Abraham!

37:105 You have already affirmed the vision. We – This is so – We must reward the doers of good.”

37:106 This was a trial, clear in itself. [Leaving the prestigious office of Chief Priesthood in Babylon and now the comfort of Syria-Palestine for the wilderness of Makkah.]

37:107 We exchanged his life for a Momentous Sacrifice. [Please notice here the absence of the Biblical and the traditional myth of a 'ram' sent

from the heavens. Also, note that slaughtering of a sheep or goat, by no means, can be considered a Momentous Sacrifice.]

37:108 And We left for him remembrance among the later generations.

37:109 Peace and salutation to Abraham!

37:110 Thus do We reward the benefactors of humanity.

37:111 He was one of Our truly believing servants.
Abraham Teaches His People By Examples In The Cosmos:

6:74 Remember when Abraham said to his father Azar, "How could you worship idols as gods? I see you and your people are in obvious error." [Azar is called Terah in the Bible and Zarah in Talmud.]

6:75 And to this end, We gave Abraham insight into the Mighty Dominion of the Universe so that he might attain firm conviction.
6:76 (Some of his people were idolaters and others were nature-worshipers.) One night when it grew dark upon him he saw a planet (Venus). He said, "This is my Lord." But when it set, he said, "I do not love things that fade away."

6:77 (Another night) when he saw the moon rising in splendor, he said, "This is my Lord." But when it set, he said, "Unless my Lord guides me, I will be of those who go astray."

6:78 (In the morning) when he saw the sun rising in splendor, he said, "This is my Lord. This is greater!" But when it set, he said, "O My people! I am free from all your idolatry." [Of course, Abraham knew that the celestial bodies were not gods. He is only preaching to his people by example.]

6:79 "I have focused firmly on Him Who initiated the heavens and earth. As an upright man turning away from all that is false, I will never be an idolater."

6:80 His people argued with him, but Abraham said, "Do you dispute with me about God when He has guided me? I do not fear those you associate with Him. Nothing can happen to me contrary to the laws of

God. My Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge. Will you not then, reflect and use your intellect?" [Abraham taught his people to reflect and be rational.]

6:81 He said, "Why should I fear what you set up beside Him, when you do not fear to set up besides God, deities for which He has sent no authority and are utterly powerless. Think, which of the two sides among us deserves peace and security? Answer me if you have the answer."

6:82 Those who attain belief and do not confound their belief with falsehood, for them is inner peace and security. They are rightly guided.

6:83 This is the logic (examples of the star, the moon and the sun) that We taught Abraham against his people. We exalt people in ranks when they follow Our laws. Your Lord is Wise, All Knower.

The Scrolls Of Abraham:

53:37 And (the Scrolls) of Abraham who fulfilled his obligations. [The Divine message has essentially been the same. Herein are mentioned some of those laws, Twelve Maxims of intense beauty from the Scrolls of Abraham.]

53:38 No laden one shall bear the load of another.

53:39 Every human being shall be responsible for his works, and compensated for, his labor.

53:40 His effort (and not the results) will be seen.

53:41 Then he will be fully rewarded for it.

53:42 To your Lord is the final destination. [79:44. Your goal shall be your Lord's Rule on earth]

53:43 He is the One Who causes you to laugh, and to cry. [The basic principles that cause nations to live in prosperity versus misery, are being mentioned here.]

53:44 He is the One Who gives death and gives life. [The rise and fall of nations follow His laws. And these laws are most excellently expounded in the Qur'an.]

53:45 He is the One Who creates the two companions, the male and the female (pairs and opposites among His creation), 53:46 From gametes that unite.

53:47 He has promised to bring about a second life (the ultimate accountability).

53:48 He is the One Who gives wealth and contentment. [Only His laws can bestow true prosperity.]

53:49 He is the One Who is the Lord of the brightest star, the human intellect. [Shi'ra = Sha'oor = Intellect. Shi'ra is also the Arabic name of the brightest star Sirius in the constellation Canis Major. It was widely worshiped in ancient Middle East.]

53:50 He is the One Who annihilated the former tribe of 'Aad. [They were men of intellect but refused to establish the Divine System. 7:65. A wrong system, however smartly run, is bound to collapse.]

Abraham's Conduct Is An Excellent Pattern For All Humanity:

60:4 There is an excellent pattern for you in Abraham, and his companions …

60:6 In them, you have an excellent pattern, for anyone whose hope is in God and in the Last Day …

CHAPTER - 9

PROPHET LOT (LUT)

Azar, the tenth in descent from Noah, fathered Abraham, Nahor and Haran, and Haran fathered Lot. Prophets Abraham and Lot existed about 2000 BC.

Prophet Lot was sent as a Messenger to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities on the banks of the Dead Sea.

Homosexuality, open lewdness and highway robbery were their main crimes.

7:80 Lot told them, "You commit such an abomination that no one in the worlds has (openly) done before you."

7:81 You approach men with lust in preference to women. Nay, but you are a people crossing all bounds."

7:82 They said, "Drive them out of your town! These people want to be models of purity."

7:83 We saved him and his followers. But his wife who lagged behind in belief stayed with the crowd, and was destroyed.

The Grievous End:

7:84 And We rained a rain upon them (a huge shower of stones). See now how grievous was the end of the guilty. [A huge volcano was about to erupt. The Prophet of God had advance knowledge and he moved out at the right time, along with his followers.]
Prophets and their followers escaped natural disasters since they believed and took appropriate precautions.

11:77 When Our Messengers came to Lot he was distressed, and did not know how to save his people. He exclaimed, "This is a difficult day!"

11:78 And the most iniquitous among his people came rushing to Lot. (They wanted the visiting Messengers to approve their behavior.) Lot

said, "O My people! Your wives, who are like my daughters, are permitted for you. Be mindful of God, and do not humiliate me in the presence of my guests. Is there not a single upright man among you?"

11:79 They said, "You know, we have little interest in our wives whom you call your daughters. You know well what we want."

7:80 Lot told them, "You commit such an abomination that no one in the worlds has (openly) done before you."

29:28 And Lot said to his people, "You commit such an abomination as no one in the world has done (openly) before you.

29:29 Do you not approach males, and cut off the way of nature? Do you not commit highway robbery? And do you not commit shameful vices openly in your assemblies?" But his people's only answer was, "Bring down upon us the punishment of God if you are a man of truth."

29:30 He prayed, "My Lord! Help me against people who spread corruption and disorder."

The Messengers Sent To Lot, First Visited Abraham:

51:24 And (as a historical evidence) has the story of Abraham's honored guests reached you?

51:25 When they visited him greeting him with "Peace!" He answered, "Peace to you strangers!"

51:26 Then he went quietly to his household, and brought forth a well-bred roasted calf.

51:27 And placed it before them, saying, "Will you not eat?"

51:28 Then he felt apprehensive of them. They said, "Fear not!" And they gave him the good news of a son who would be endowed with knowledge. [Abraham was concerned, since people with aggressive designs used to refuse hospitality. But they were hurrying to Sodom. 11:69-76, 15:50-55, 26:69, 29:31]

51:29 Then his wife came forward with a loud cry and struck her face in astonishment and said, “An old barren woman!”

51:30 They said, “Thus your Lord has spoken. He, He alone is All Wise, All Knower.”

51:31 Abraham said, “And now what is your task, O Messengers!”

51:32 They replied, “We have been sent to a guilty people who violate human rights and choose to do wrong,

51:33 That we may shower them with stones of clay,

51:34 Marked out by your Lord for those who have wasted their own ‘self’.”

51:35 We then brought forth safe all believers that were in town.

51:36 But We found therein none but one Muslim household!

51:37 And so We left therein a sign for those who fear a painful consequence (of their misdeeds).

29:31 When Our Messengers brought the glad news to Abraham (of a son Isaac), they also said, "We are appointed to herald the annihilation of that town, for its people are wrongdoers." [Abraham lived in Hebron, Palestine about 2000 BC. From the heights in Hebron he could see the Valley of Sodom by the Dead Sea.]

29:32 Abraham said, "But Lot is also there." They said, "We know well who dwell there. We will certainly save him, his household and his followers; all but his wife who will stay behind (since she has stayed behind in belief)."
‘Ahl’ of a Prophet denotes his household and, especially, his followers. 7:80-84, 11:70-89, 15:59, 21:71-76, 26:161-167, 27:54-56, 66:10.

29:33 When Our Messengers came to Lot, he was grieved on their account, for he could not protect them. But they said, "Fear not, nor grieve! We are appointed to save you, your household and your followers, except your wife who will stay behind.

29:34 We are about to herald the heavenly requital upon the people of this town because of their drifting away from Permanent Values."

29:35 And so it was. Therein We have left a clear sign for people who use their intellect.
The Dead Sea to this day is also known as Bahr-e-Lut, the Sea of Lot, and it remains devoid of plant and animal life.

CHAPTER - 10

PROPHET ISHMAEL (ISMAIL)

Ishmael resided permanently in Makkah, while his father kept traveling between Hagar (Haajirah) in Makkah and Sarah in Can'aan (Syria-Palestine). Ishmael married a woman from the Qahtani Tribe of Jurham and became the ancestor of Musta Ribah (Arabianized tribes or the early Arabs). So the Arabs are, interestingly, descendants of Prophet Ishmael and a Qahtani Jurham mother from the Arabian Peninsula. They had twelve sons in their long and happy married life. The Qahtanis are still abundantly found in Arabia. They were a wandering tribe in Arabia that had settled in Makkah before Ishmael, because of the (contrary to popular legend) pre-existing well of Zam-Zam. The "Wilderness of Beer-Sheba" of Genesis 21:14, embraces the Southern Palestine, and Hijaz (the mid-western Arabia). Therefore, the Bible and the Qur'an are in agreement concerning where Ishmael and his mother Hagar had settled after moving from Can'aan.

Ishmael In The Bible:

Here is a glimpse of history about Hagar and Ishmael as found in the Bible.

Genesis 17:20 - As for Ishmael, I have heard you (O Abraham); behold, I will bless him and make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen. 21:17 - And God heard the voice of the lad (Ishmael); and the angel of God called to Hagar from the Heights, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not; for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him fast with your hand; for I will make him a great nation.

Gen. 21:20 - And God was with the lad, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran (Faran, Makkah).

The Qur'an – The First Scripture For Arabs:

This history also explains why the Qur'an repeatedly asserts that the Arabs had not received any scripture before the Qur'an [7:158]. The Arabs, being the descendants of Ishmael, could only become a community long after Ishmael had passed on and when his progeny had multiplied with time. Another Note: The Valley was a barren land, but Abraham settled his family in the town of Makkah, near the soon to be built Ka'bah. So, contrary to popular legends, Abraham never left his family in the isolation of a desert. Prophet Hud is thought to be the first ever Messenger to be raised in the Arabian Peninsula. Let us bear in mind that the inhabitants of the Peninsula were not Arabs before Prophet Ishmael whose period of advent is about 2000 BC. Prophet Abraham lived in Ur, Babylon (Mesopotamia, now Iraq), Can'aan (Palestine), and later in Makkah. He is the ancestor of Jews, and Arabs, and ideologically, of all Christians and Muslims. Isaac was his son from Sarah, and Ishmael was his son from Hagar (Haajirah). From his son Isaac descended Jacob (Israel) and the Children of Israel. Through his other son, Ishmael descended the Arabs and God's last Messenger, Muhammad, the exalted.

Abraham's father Azar, as the Chief Priest, was the most powerful man in Babylon, next only to the King. As the progeny of Azar, Abraham and Ishmael were entitled to the luxurious and powerful office of the Chief Priesthood in the court of King Nimrod. But they sacrificed all temptation in order to follow the commands of God and strove to establish True Monotheism wherever they lived. Midyan was another of Prophet Abraham's son from his third wife Qatoora. His progeny had settled in the Arabian Peninsula as well, and Prophet Jethro (Sho'aib) was sent to the Midyans during the times of Moses.

Abraham And Ishmael Built The Ka'bah:

2:127 As Abraham raised the foundations of the House together with Ishmael, they prayed earnestly, "Our Lord! Accept this (our service) from us. You are the Hearer, Knower."

2:128 "Our Lord! Make us submissive to You and of our descendants let there be a community submissive to You. Show us the best ways to serve You and enable us to make amends. You are the Absolver of imperfections, the Merciful. [2:186, 2:286]

2:129 "Our Lord! Raise from among them a Messenger who will convey Your messages to them and instruct them in the scripture (by personal example) and the wisdom (behind each command). And also teach them how to grow in goodness. You are Almighty, the Wise."

Among mankind there always have been those who submit, and those who transgress. The Children of Israel enjoyed great Divine blessings, but for their repeated transgressions they faced bitter consequences (2:259, 17:5-6), and God's bounty of prophethood, in His Infinite wisdom, moved away from the Children of Israel to the Children of Ishmael, among whom was raised Muhammad, the Final Prophet/Messenger of God.

37:100 (Abraham migrated to Syria-Can'aan and prayed), "My Lord! Grant me a healthy child." 37:101 So We gave him the good news of a clement son (Ishmael).

The Momentous Sacrifice Again:

37:102 And when he was old enough to strive along with him, Abraham said, "O My dear son! I have a vision that I must give you to a life of test and tribulation for a Noble cause (37:107). So look, what do you think?" He said, "O My father! Do what you are commanded. God willing, you will find me of the steadfast." ['Zibh' and 'Zabh' = Sacrifice = Disregard comfort for a Noble cause. Just as Qatl = To subdue, kill, fight, humiliate, bring low]

37:103 As both of them had surrendered themselves (to God), he made Ishmael further submit in gratitude. [Contrary to popular tradition, Abraham never envisioned or intended to slaughter his son. God does not play games with His servants. Literal 'forehead to ground' = complete submission in gratitude]

37:104 We called unto him, "O Abraham!

37:105 You have already affirmed the vision. We – This is so – We must reward the doers of good."

37:106 This was a trial, clear in itself. [Leaving the prestigious office of Chief Priesthood in Babylon and now the comfort of Syria-Can'aan for the wilderness of Makkah.]

37:107 We exchanged his life for a Momentous Sacrifice. [Please notice here the absence of the Biblical and the traditional myth of a 'ram' sent from the heavens. Also, note that slaughtering of a sheep or goat, by no means, can be considered a Momentous Sacrifice. 14:37, 37:102]

CHAPTER - 11

PROPHET ISAAC (ISHAQ)

Prophet Abraham lived around 2000 BC in Ur, Babylon (Mesopotamia, now Iraq), Can'aan (Palestine), and later in Makkah. He is the ancestor of Jews, and Arabs, and ideologically, of all Jews, Christians and Muslims. Isaac was his son from Sarah, and Ishmael was his son from Hagar (Hajirah). From his son Isaac descended Jacob (Israel) and the Children of Israel. Through his elder son, Ishmael, descended the Arabs and God's last Messenger, Muhammad, the exalted.

2:140 And you claim that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribal Israelite Prophets were 'Jews' or 'Christians'! Say, "Do you know better than God?" Ah, who could be more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from God? But God is not unaware of what you do.

Amazingly, the Qur'an is alluding to a historical fact that was unanimously accepted from research done centuries later! Scholars of the Bible know that the concept of 'Jewry' came into being long after the Patriarchs and after Moses. Likewise, the term and the doctrine of 'Christianity' were unknown during the life of Jesus.

3:84 Declare (O Muhammad), "We believe in God and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and their descendant Prophets, and what was given from their Lord to Moses, Jesus and the other Prophets. We make no distinction among any of them. And we submit to Him alone." [All Prophets were one in purpose. 2:253, 17:55]

21:72 We bestowed upon Abraham, a son Isaac and a grandson Jacob. We made all of them great benefactors of humanity as they addressed the inequities in human thought and behavior.

21:73 We made them leaders who set the standards of leadership. They guided people as We commanded, into doing collective good for the society, and to establish the Divine System with a Just Economic Order. They were true servants of Ours.

CHAPTER - 12

PROPHET JACOB (YA'QOOB)

Prophet Jacob was son of Isaac son of Abraham. Jacob lived about 1700 BC. He had twelve sons from four wives. Joseph the second youngest and Benjamin (Binyamin), the youngest had the same mother (Rachel). Jacob's title was 'Israel' (the powerful) according to an irrational story in the Bible showing him wrestling with God and winning!

Genesis: 32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man [God] with him until the breaking of the day.

32:25 And when he [God] saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, ----. [He grabbed Jacob's testicles according to ancient readings. Prof K. U. Dean]

32:26 And he [God] said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. [Jacob could have grounded God. Getting blessed by force?]

32:27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. [God has to ask his name!]

32:28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

The Qur'an Ignores This Irrationality:

2:131 When his Lord said to him (Abraham), "Submit (your will) to Me!" He said, "I submit to the Lord of the Worlds."

2:132 This very legacy Abraham left to his children, and so did Jacob, saying, "O My children! Indeed, God has chosen for you the Way of Life. Therefore, let not death overtake you except that you are submitters (Muslim)."

2:140 And you claim that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribal Israelite Prophets were 'Jews' or 'Christians'! Say, "Do you know better

than God?" Ah, who could be more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from God? But God is not unaware of what you do.

Amazingly, the Qur'an is alluding to a historical fact that was unanimously accepted from research done centuries later! Scholars of the Bible know that the concept of 'Jewry' came into being long after the Patriarchs and after Moses. Likewise, the term and the doctrine of 'Christianity' were unknown during the life of Jesus.

Jacob had twelve sons from four wives. Joseph the second youngest and Benjamin (Binyamin), the youngest had the same mother (Rachel).

Prophet Joseph's life history covers much of Prophet Jacob's account.

CHAPTER - 13

PROPHET JOSEPH (YUSUF)

Prophet Joseph son of Prophet Jacob had died around 1600 BC. His successors gradually lost control of the government and the native Egyptians started up a slow but steady rebellion against the Israelites. About a century later around 1500 BC, the Egyptians wrested control of the government and established a Kingdom. The Egyptian Kings from then on assumed the title of 'Pharaoh'. They began persecuting the Israelites about 1400 BC and this persecution reached its zenith in the times of Prophet Moses, under the rule of Pharaoh Ramses II, 1290 to 1224 BC. Joseph is the only Prophet whose entire story is continuously given in one Surah (Chapter) of the Qur'an (Surah number 12).

The Sublime purpose of the Qur'an, even in historical accounts, consistently remains enlightenment for the reader. Prophet Jacob titled Israel, was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. Jacob had twelve sons from four wives. Joseph the second youngest and Benjamin (Binyamin), the youngest, had the same mother (Rachel). Joseph was born in Hebron, Palestine, and according to the Bible died at the age of 110.

Two Mandatory Qualities Of A Good Leader: Sincerity and Competence (Hafeez, 'Aleem 12:55 = Qawi, Ameen 28:26)

Note: The Egyptian head of state of Prophet Joseph's era is referred to as 'Malik' (Ruler or King) in the Qur'an. In the book of Genesis of the Bible, he is erroneously called Pharaoh. The term Pharaoh came in use only for kings after 1500 BC which historians call as the New Kingdom. Prophet Joseph lived around 1700 BC during the Old Kingdom that of Amalekites. In the story of Moses, the Qur'an uses the term Pharaoh for the Egyptian ruler. [Moses lived around 1400 BC during the New Kingdom of Pharaohs.]

The Qur'an extols Mary among women and Prophet Joseph among men for their extra-ordinary determination, character and chastity. Of course, they were endowed with numerous other virtues.

The Story Begins In Egypt When Joseph Was A Child:

12:4 Thus spoke Joseph to his father, "O My father! I have seen in a dream eleven stars, and the sun, and the moon. I saw them bowing to me in honor!"

12:5 Jacob replied, "O My dear son! Do not relate your dream to your brothers lest they plot a scheme against you. Surely, Satan (selfish ego) is man's open enemy."

12:7 In the story of Joseph and his brothers there are messages for all with a seeking mind.

His Elder Brothers Get Jealous And Make Schemes:

12:9 One of them proposed, "Let us slay Joseph or leave him in a distant land. Then your father's favor will be all for you, and your affairs will be adjusted right for you."

They Cast Him In A Well:

12:10 Another of them suggested, "Do not slay Joseph. Rather, if you must do something, cast him into a deep well, and some caravan may pick him up."

12:15 Unanimous in their decision, they led Joseph to cast him into a deep well. When they were placing Joseph in the well, We revealed to him that he would remain secure, and one day he would tell his brothers about what they did. We also revealed to him that it would be a mystery to them as to how Joseph was saved!

12:16 After carrying out their plan they came to their father at night weeping.

12:17 Saying, "O Our father! We went racing with each other, and left Joseph by our belongings. A wolf did eat him up. We fear that you will not believe us even though we speak the truth."

12:18 And they came with false blood on his shirt. He said, "I do not believe this story; you have made it up. I will remain steadfast in the face of your conspiracy, and God is the One Whose help is sought in the kind of misfortune you describe to me."

A Caravan Comes By:

12:19 There came a caravan, and they sent their water drawer. He let down his rope and pail into the well. He called in excitement, "Oh, what a lucky find! It is a boy!" People of the caravan took him along as treasure. And God was Aware of what they did.

Joseph Is Bought By The Governor:

12:20 They sold him in the market for a low price, a few silver coins. They had little idea of his value.

12:21 The one who bought him in Egypt said to his wife, "Receive him honorably. Take good care of him. May be he can help us or we can adopt him as a son." We, thus, established Joseph in Egypt and arranged for him proper education and training. He was gifted with a great insight into events. God's command always prevails although most people do not try to understand.

The Governor's Wife, Zelicha (Zulaikha), Tries To Seduce Joseph:

12:23 The lady of the house tried to seduce him. She closed the doors and said, "I am all yours." He said, "May God protect me! Truly, He is my Lord and He has bestowed upon me a good moral character and granted me a position of honor. The wrongdoers do not prosper."

12:24 She desired him, and he would have desired her if he had not known the clear moral value from his Sustainer ("Go not near adultery" 17:32.) Obeying Our command saved him from evil and lewdness. He was among Our sincere servants.

12:25 And they raced to the door and in the process, she tore his shirt from behind. They found her husband at the door. She said, "What should be the punishment for one who wanted to molest your wife, except prison or a painful chastisement?"

12:26 Joseph said, "She is the one who tried to seduce me." Now a member of her family came and suggested, "If his shirt is torn from the front, then she is telling the truth, and he is the liar.

12:27 And if his shirt is torn from the back then she lied, and he is telling the truth."

Joseph Proven Innocent:

12:28 When her husband saw the shirt torn from the back, he said, "This is the typical scheme of you women. Your scheming is formidable." [His discriminatory comment shows his anger, and that women in that society were not viewed well]

12:29 He said, "O Joseph! Forget about what happened. And you O woman! Ask forgiveness. For, you have been greatly at fault."

Women In Town:

12:30 Women in the city started gossiping, "The governor's wife is trying to seduce her servant. She is deeply in love with him. But we see that she adopted the wrong tactics."

12:31 When she heard their gossip, she invited them, and prepared comfortable couches for them, and they schemed. She gave a knife to each of the women. Then, she called Joseph, "Come out to them!" And when they saw him they flattered him and 'cut their hands'. They exclaimed in their flattery, "Good Sustainer! This is no mortal man! This is but an angel!" [The governor's wife and her friends had planned to incite Joseph into behaving indecently. "Cut their hands" = They exhausted their efforts. There is absolutely no mention of the supposed "beauty' of Joseph, a fabrication adopted by ancient and modern commentators. Secondly, the root word *Qat'a* in this verse is of very special significance. Did these women chop off their hands? Must the thieves get their hands chopped off? Please see 5:38-39]

12:32 The lady of the house said, "This is he about whom you blamed me. I tried to seduce him but he firmly saved himself. Since he thinks he is an angel, and remains adamant against my command, he shall be imprisoned and brought low. [The women made up allegations against him.]

Joseph Wrongfully Imprisoned:

12:33 He said, "My Sustainer! Prison is dearer to me than what they invite me to. Unless You help me fend off their schemes, I am afraid of getting intimidated and of behaving like the ignorant ones."

12:34 His Sustainer heard his prayer, and helped Joseph remain steadfast in fending off their schemes. He is the Hearer, the Knower (of all intentions and actions).

12:35 Later, the judges, even after seeing the proofs (of his innocence), decided to put him in prison for a while.

The King Of Egypt Sees A Dream:

12:43 And one day the King of Egypt said to his court, "I have dreamed seven fat cows being eaten up by seven lean cows and seven green spikes of wheat and (seven) dry. O My chiefs! Explain to me my vision, if you can interpret dreams."

12:44 They answered, "Confused nightmares! We are not skilled in interpreting such dreams."
This king was not a Pharaoh. He is probably the second of the six Hyksos rulers who dominated Egypt between 1700-1580 BC, after invading the country through the Sinai Peninsula.

12:46 He said, "Joseph, O You truthful one! Explain for us the seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean ones, and the seven green spikes of wheat and others dry. I wish to go back with information that they may know" (the interpretation and your value).

Joseph Interprets The Dream:

12:47 Joseph told him the meaning and the way to avert the oncoming famine, "Work hard on agriculture for seven seasons. When you harvest the crop, only reap the amount you need. Leave the rest of the grains in the spikes (to store for the ensuing famine)."

12:48 "Then after that will come seven dry seasons which will use up all that you have prepared for them, but a little that you have stored up."

12:49 "After that, one year will come with good rains and the crops will be plenty. You will get abundant grain and fruit, and a lot of oil and juice to squeeze." [Please note that only a Messenger of God could correctly interpret dreams since God shares His knowledge of the future only with a Messenger He chooses.]

Governor's Wife And Her Friends Admit Their Fault:

12:50 And the King said, "Bring him before me!" When the courier came to Joseph, he said, "Return to your King and ask him to find out the case of the women who marked their hands. Certainly, my Lord knows their plot." [Joseph asked for investigation before being released to vindicate his character.]

12:51 The King sent for those women, and asked them, "What happened when you tried to seduce Joseph?" They answered, "Good Lord! We found no evil in him." The wife of the governor couldn't hold back, "Now the truth is out. I was the one at fault and he is truthful."

Again, The King Was Not A Pharaoh:

12:54 The King said, "Bring him to me so that I may appoint him a close adviser to me." And when he had spoken with him, the King decreed, "From today on you have a high standing with us, invested with all trust." [Note the Egyptian head of state of Prophet Joseph's era referred as 'Malik' (Ruler or King) and not as Pharaoh, the word that appears erroneously in the book of Genesis. The term Pharaoh came in use only for kings after 1500 BC which historians call the New Kingdom. Prophet Joseph lived around 1700 BC during the Old Kingdom, that of Amalekites. In the story of Moses, the term Pharaoh is used for the Egyptian ruler. Moses lived around 1400 BC during the New Kingdom, that of Pharaohs.]

Joseph Becomes The Finance Minister:

12:55 Joseph replied, "Place in my charge the land resources (the treasury) of the State. I will prove to be a knowledgeable guardian." [Now that he could personally handle the oncoming drought.]

Joseph's Brothers Come To Him:

12:58 (And after some years) Joseph's brothers came and presented themselves before him. Joseph recognized them, but they did not know him. [They came from Can'aan to buy grain as places around Egypt started suffering the drought.]

12:59 And when he had given them suitable provisions, he said, "Next time bring to me that brother of yours from your father's side (Binyamin = Benjamin). Now you have seen that I am just and hospitable."

12:69 When they met with Joseph, he brought his brother closer to him and said, "I am your brother, do not grieve about what they have been doing to us."

One Brother Tried To Incriminate Benjamin Of Theft:

12:70 As the camels were being loaded, one of the brothers hid the drinking-cup into his brother's (Benjamin's) saddlebag. Then a caller cried, "O Camel-riders! You are thieves!"

The Qur'an Corrects Genesis which states that it was Joseph who had placed the cup in their pack. 12:77-89]

Benjamin Detained In Egypt, Jacob Grieved:

12:75 The brothers replied, "The penalty for it! He in whose bag the cup is found, he shall be the penalty for it. (The thief will become your slave.) Thus we requite the doers of such wrong (in our land)."

12:84 Then Jacob turned away from them saying, "Ah, my grief for Joseph!" His eyes glistened with tears but he suppressed his grief."

Jacob worried more about Joseph since he had no news of him yet. Many exponents at this point have ventured into strange guesswork. They report that Prophet Jacob became blind, crying incessantly for eighty years grieving for Joseph! The Bible relates that Jacob lived to be 147 years old. Even so, it is not befitting of a Prophet of God, or even an ordinary person, to turn blind with grief and weep incessantly for 80 years. The whiteness of his eyes in this verse clearly refers to his eyes glistening with tears momentarily. And then he controlled his grief.

Brothers Recognize Joseph And He Forgives Them:

12:90 They exclaimed, "What? Is it really you who are Joseph?" He answered, "I am Joseph and this is my brother. God has been Gracious to us. If one empowers himself against evil, and is steadfast, God never wastes the reward of such doers of good."

12:91 They said, "By God! God has exalted you above us, and we were at fault."

12:92 Joseph said, “There is no blame on you this day! May God forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.”

Joseph Moves His Family To Egypt:

12:96 (The caravan arrived in Can’aan.) The bearer of the good news came and cast (Joseph’s royal shirt) over his (Jacob’s) face, he was delighted and his eyes saw the reality. He said, “Did I not tell you that I know from God what you do not know?”

12:99 And when they came in before Joseph, he respectfully greeted his parents, “Welcome to Egypt! God willing, you will be in safety and peace here.”

12:100 He raised his parents upon the throne of honor. All those present bowed to him in respect (to let his parents see the honor God had given their son). Joseph said, “O My father! This is how my Lord has made my dream come true. He has been very kind to me, since He freed me from the prison, and He has brought you here from the village. Satan (selfishness of my brothers) had sown enmity between us brothers. My Lord is Unfathomable in the ways He carries out His will. For, He is the Knower, the Wise.”

Again: Prophet Joseph son of Prophet Israel Jacob had died around 1600 BC. His successors gradually lost control of the government and the native Egyptians started up a slow but steady rebellion against the Israelites. About a century later around 1500 BC, the Egyptians wrested control of the government and established a Kingdom. The Egyptian Kings from then on assumed the title of ‘Pharaoh’. They began persecuting the Israelites about 1400 BC and this persecution reached its zenith in the times of Prophet Moses, under the rule of Pharaoh Ramses II, 1290 to 1224 BC.

CHAPTER - 14

PROPHET JETHRO (SHO'AIB)

Prophet Sho'aib was sent to the fertile lands of Midyan about 1400 BC: Midyan has also been called as "As-haab-ul-ayikah" (dwellers of the Wood Dales) in the Qur'an (26:176). They lived in fertile lands with plenty of irrigation systems, wells, springs and natural streams. The chief vices infesting this prosperous nation were economic. Agriculture, tending farm animals and commerce were their means of living.

They were dishonest in their business dealings and often committed fraud. Their society was divided into classes according to wealth. As in all capitalistic societies, they had some rich elite holding most of the resources. The middle class was small, and poverty was the lot of the majority. They were further divided into sects depending on which god a particular tribe worshiped. Idolatry, without exception, comes with its inherent divisions, hatred and exploitation by the priesthood. The deprived people frequently lurked on the highways ambushing caravans.

Prophet Sho'aib was a contemporary, the father-in-law, of Prophet Moses. The Bible names him Jethro. A man of exemplary character, Sho'aib earned his living as an honest merchant and he was quite prosperous. He addressed all inequities in the society.

His Main Teachings:

Most importantly, he announced that none could be a godly person unless he or she looked after the well-being of the fellow humans. Devotion to God must reflect on how people spend their wealth.

7:85 To Midyan, We sent Sho'aib, their brother, to them (around 1400 BC). He said, "O My people! Obey God. There is none else worthy of obedience and law-giving. Now has come to you the clear evidence of truth from your Lord. Give just measure and weight and do not withhold from people the things that are rightfully theirs. And do no corruption (and crimes) in the land after it has been set in order. This will be best for you if you are believers. [The Nation of Midyan lived between Madinah and Damascus since around 2000 BC. They were the

descendants of Prophet Abraham's son Midyan from his third wife Qatoora. Most of them were traders but they squandered justice and equity in business.]

Highway Robbery:

7:86 Lurk not on every road threatening travelers and hinder not from the path of God those who believe in Him, nor seek to make it crooked. Remember, when you were few and weak and how He multiplied and strengthened you. And see how (miserable) was the end of the corrupters.

7:87 A group among you has believed in what I have been sent with and the other group has not believed. Then have patience (let the believers work their program of reform), until God judges between us. He is the Best of deciders."

The Leaders Threatened To Exile Him:

7:88 The arrogant leaders of his community said, "O Sho'aib! We will certainly drive you and those who believe with you out of our town unless you return to our ways." Sho'aib said, "Why, even though we detest your ways?"

7:89 "We will be inventing a lie against God if we reverted to your religion after God has saved us from it. It is not for us to return to it against the will of God, our Lord. Our Lord comprehends all things in knowledge. In God do we put our trust. Our Lord! Decide with truth between us and our people. You are the Best of deciders."

As Always, The Rich Elite Were The First To Oppose The Message:

7:90 But the disbelieving chiefs of his nation said, "O People! If you follow Sho'aib, then be sure, you will be ruined" (as you lose the big profits in trade).

The Requital: Stormy Rain With Massive Earthquake

7:91 Tremendous earthquakes seized them and the morning found them dead in their homes, on the ground.

7:92 Those who denied Sho'aib became as though they had never lived there. Those who denied Sho'aib were the losers.

7:93 (The Prophet of God had been forewarned of the oncoming catastrophe and he moved out into the valley along with his followers.) As he was leaving, he said, "O My people! I delivered my Lord's messages to you and gave you sincere advice. How could I mourn for people who rejected the truth?"

Adversities As A Wake-up Call:

7:94 We sent no Prophet to a community without Our Law of Requital trying them with adversity and tribulation for their wrongdoings that they become humble.

7:95 Then We changed their plight for better until they became affluent. Then they said, "Even our forefathers were touched by suffering and affluence." We seized them all of a sudden when they least expected it. [They thought that hardships and prosperity were just a matter of chance. To them the requital appeared sudden, but unjust systems insidiously move toward disaster.]

Blessings For Those Who Believe In Divine Laws:

7:96 If the people of the townships had believed in the Divine laws and run their system right, We would have opened for them blessings from the heaven and earth. But they denied and what they earned with their deeds seized them.

11:84 And to Midyan, We sent their brother Sho'aib. He said, "O My people! Serve God alone. There is no god for you but He. And do not give short measure and weight. I see that you are prosperous. But I fear for you a day that will surround you with chastisement." [Any system based on injustice cannot endure.]

Equity and Order:

11:85 "So, O My people! Always give full measure and weight with equity and do not deprive people of what is rightfully theirs. Do not spread corruption and disorder in the land."

11:86 "That which God gives you as just profit is better for you if you believe. But I am not a guardian over you."

Religion, Salaat And Economy:

11:87 They said, "O Sho'aib! (We had thought that your religion was only a matter between you and your Lord.) Does your way of prayer (Salaat) command that we should forsake the worship that our fathers practiced? Or, that we should give up doing what we like to do with our economy? You want us to think that you are the only clement, and the rightly guided man among us."

Practice What You Preach:

11:88 He said, "O My people, think again! What if I am acting on a clear evidence from my Lord, and He has provided me with a decent sustenance? I deal in all fairness and I shall never preach what I do not practice behind your sight. I desire nothing but reform to the best of my power. All my resources, abilities, and success depend on God alone. In Him I trust and to Him I turn with hope."

11:89 "O My people! Let not my disagreement with you be taken personally to cause you to persist in your guilt so that the same (retribution) befall you that befell the people of Noah, and the people of Hud, and the people of Saleh. And remember that the people of Lot did not live very far from you."

11:90 (No communities was destroyed for a deficiency in their worship. They met destruction for violating human rights.) "Seek forgiveness of your Lord, then repent by journeying on the right path. You will experience that my Lord is Merciful, Loving."

11:91 They said, "O Sho'aib! Much of what you tell us is beyond our comprehension. We see that you are not a man of power in our midst. If we were not concerned about your family and your tribe, we would have stoned you. You are of no value to us."

Sho'aib's Resolve:

11:92 He said, "O My people! Do my family and tribe command a greater respect than God? And you put Him behind you, neglected. Remember, my Lord surrounds all you do."

11:93 "O My people! Do your utmost and so will I. Soon you will find out which of us will incur the chastisement of humiliation, and who is a liar. Just watch as I will be watching along with you."

When The Command Comes To Pass:

11:94 When Our command came to pass, We saved Sho'aib, and those who believed with him, by a mercy from Us. An awful blast seized the wrongdoers. The morning found them dead in their very homes, on the ground. [Sho'aib and his companions had moved to safety as forewarned.]

11:95 As if they had never lived there. Oh, away with Midyan, just as the Thamud have been done away with!

15:78 And the dwellers in woods (of Midyan, the people of Sho'aib), were also wrongdoers.

15:79 And so We (Our Law of Requital) struck them. Both these communities lived by a highway, plain to see.

Re-visiting The Story Of Midyan:

26:176 The dwellers in the wood dales (Midyan = Ashab-ul-Ayikah) denied the Messengers. [The Tribe of Midyan lived between Madinah and Damascus since around 2000 BC. They were the descendants of Prophet Abraham's son Midyan from his third wife Qatoora. Prophet Sho'aib was raised among them around 1400 BC. 7:85]

26:177 When their brother Sho'aib said to them, "Will you not seek to live upright?

26:178 Truly, I am a Messenger to you, worthy of your trust.

26:179 Be mindful of God and heed me.

26:180 I ask you no reward whatsoever for it. My reward is with none but with the Lord of the Worlds.

26:181 Always give full measure, and do not cause loss to people.

26:182 And in all your dealings, weigh with a just balance.

26:183 Do not deprive people of what is rightfully theirs. And desist from creating corruption and disorder in the land.

26:184 Be mindful of Him Who created you and the generations before."

26:185 They said, "You are but of the bewitched.

26:186 You are nothing but a mortal like us. And We think that you are one of the liars.

26:187 If you are truthful, let fragments of the sky fall upon us."

26:188 He replied, "My Lord is best Aware of your actions."

The Day Of Canopy:

26:189 But they persisted in denial. Then the Day of overshadowing gloom seized them. It was the suffering of an awesome day.
(Historically, a dark heavy cloud rained upon them incessantly. It is sometimes referred to as the Day of the Canopy).

26:190 Herein, is a sign, and most of them were not believers (in the Law of Requital).

29:36 And to Midyan We sent their brother Sho'aib. He said, "O My people! Serve God, and look forward to the Last Day, the life to come, and do not act wickedly on earth spreading disorder and corruption."

29:37 But they denied him. Thereupon a dreadful rainstorm and earthquake overtook them, and morning found them dead, prone in their homes.

Sho'aib As An Old Man – Father-in-law Of Moses:

28:22 As he (Moses migrated from Egypt and) turned his face towards Midyan, he said to himself, "It may well be that my Lord will guide me onto the right road."

28:23 When he arrived at the wells of Midyan, he found a crowd of people watering their herds and flocks. And he found two women who were keeping away their flocks. He asked, "What is the matter with you?" They said, "We cannot water our flocks until the shepherds take back their flocks. And our father is a very old man."

28:24 So he watered their flocks for them; then he turned back to the shade (of the tree he had been relaxing under). And he said, "My Lord! I am in dire need of any good that You bestow upon me and any opportunity that You provide me for doing good."

28:25 Shortly afterwards, one of the two maidens came to him walking shyly, and said, "My father invites you, so that he might duly reward you for having watered our flocks for us." As soon as Moses came to him and told him the story, he said, "Have no fear! You are now safe from those oppressive people."

28:26 One of the two maidens said, "O My father! Hire him! For, the best one you can hire is the competent, the trustworthy." [See 12:55 under Joseph.]

Moses Marries Sho'aib's Daughter Zipporah:

28:27 He said, "I am willing to let you marry one of these two daughters of mine on the understanding that you will remain eight pilgrimages (years) in my service. Then if you make it ten, it will be a grace from you. I do not want to impose any hardship on you. God willing, you will find me righteous in all my dealings."

28:28 He (Moses) said, "Be that the agreement between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there will be no injustice to me. And God be Witness to all that we say." [Moses married Sho'aib's daughter Zipporah and in time they had two sons.]

28:29 And when Moses had fulfilled his term, and was traveling with his family, he saw a fire on the slope of Mount Toor of Sinai. He said to his family, "Stay here. I have seen a fire. I hope to bring you some information from there, or a burning torch, that you may warm yourselves." [20:10, 27:7]

CHAPTER - 15

PROPHET MOSES (MUSA)

Prophet Moses existed during 1526 BC – 1406 BC. He lived in Egypt, Sinai and Syria-Can'aan.

The honored Messengers of God, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were descendants of the Patriarch, Abraham. Prophet Jacob, the grandson of Abraham was also called Israel. Jews are known as Israelites in reference to Jacob. 'Imran (Amram) is the name of the father of Moses and Aaron, and also of a branch among Israelites. Mary, the mother of Jesus, belonged to the progeny of 'Imran. She was a descendant of Prophet Aaron. The Qur'an confirms only the Divine origination of the Bible, but it strongly points to the extensive human touch in the Old & New Testaments. (2:75, 2:78-79, 2:101, 3:70-71, 3:78, 3:186-187, 5:13, 5:41, 6:91, 9:31).

Surah 28 Al-Qasas narrates the story of Moses and his marriage to Sho'aib's daughter (Zipporah). So, for the sake of continuity this narration includes some early days of Moses as well.

28:7 We inspired the mother of Moses, "Nourish him and when you worry for his life, (place him in a box and) cast him into the river, and have no fear nor grieve. We shall bring him back to you and make him one of Our Messengers." [The mother of Moses was the wife of Amram (Imran). They had three children: Miriam, Aaron and Moses in that order. Mary, mother of Jesus had descended from Amram through Aaron, and that is why the Qur'an refers to her as Maryam daughter of Imran. The Royal decree of Pharaoh applied to the new born boys when Aaron was already a few years old.]

28:8 And the family of Pharaoh picked him up, not knowing that he would become an enemy to them and a source of grief. That is because Pharaoh, Haman and their troops were a people bent on committing fault upon fault.

28:9 The wife of Pharaoh said, "A joy to the eye for me and you! Do not slay him. He may well be of use to us, or we may adopt him as a son." And they did not perceive (the future).

28:10 And the heart of the mother of Moses became void. She almost gave away his identity had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might remain a firm believer.

28:11 And so she said to his sister, "Follow him!" And the girl (the 12 year old Miriam) watched him from afar, while they were not aware.

28:12 From the very beginning We caused him to refuse suckling from foster mothers. She (Miriam, the sister of baby Moses) said, "Shall I tell you of a family that can raise him for you and take good care of him?"

28:13 And thus We restored him to his mother so that her eye might be gladdened and that she might grieve no longer, and that she might know that God's promise always comes true. But most of them know not.

28:14 When he reached his prime and full maturity, We bestowed upon him wisdom and knowledge. This is how We reward the doers of good to others. [Wisdom and knowledge are granted to all those who benefit people since youth. 12:22]

28:15 And one day the young Moses entered the city at a time when most of its people were resting unaware of what was going on in the streets. And there he encountered two men fighting with each other. One was of his people (a Hebrew) and the other of his (Egyptian) adversaries. His tribesman cried out to him for help against the one who was of the enemies – Whereupon Moses struck him with his fist and thus, (accidentally) brought about his end. But then he said to himself, "This is of Satan's doing! Surely, he is an open enemy, a misleader." [Moses, not yet commissioned to prophethood, was denouncing his emotions.]

28:16 And he prayed, "My Lord! Surely, I have hurt my 'Self'. Forgive me then." And He forgave him, for, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. [Moses had intended only to help the weak and not to kill the other man.]

28:17 He said, “My Lord! Since You have bestowed Your grace on me, never again will I support the guilty.”

28:18 In the morning he was in the city, fearing, watchful when the man who had asked him the day before cried out to him for help. Moses said to him, “You are one obvious troublemaker.”

28:19 But then, as soon as he was about to lay his hands on their enemy, the man said, “O Moses! Would you kill me as you killed a person yesterday? Your aim is to become a tyrant in the land, for you do not care to be of those who set things right.”

28:20 And then and there came a man running from the other side of the city, and said, "O Moses! The chiefs are considering your case with a view to kill you. You better leave immediately. Surely, I wish you well.”

28:21 So he escaped from there, fearful, vigilant and said, "My Lord! Save me from the oppressive people."

Parting Of The Sea:

2:50 And recall when We parted the sea and rescued you and drowned the people of Pharaoh right before your eyes. [When you faithfully followed Moses, We rescued you through a safe passage in the Red Sea. You crossed over through the Sea of Reeds at low tide, as if it were parted. This Exodus brought you to the safety of Sinai from the persecution in Egypt. 7:138, 10:90, 20:77, 26:63, 44:24]

2:51 (Instead of being grateful, you did something bizarre.) While We summoned Moses for forty nights to reveal Our commandments, you took to worshiping the (golden) calf in his absence. You became once again those who hurt themselves.

2:52 Then, even after that, We pardoned you and gave you another chance to show gratitude.

2:53 And We gave Moses the scripture and (thus) the Criterion (between right and wrong) so that you might be guided right.

Worshiping The Golden Calf:

2:54 When Moses returned, he said to his people, "O my people! You have hurt your own 'self' by worshiping the calf. So, turn in repentance to your Maker and kill your ego (rebellious mentality). This will be best for you in the Sight of your Maker." Thereupon He turned toward you accepting your repentance. He is the Acceptor of repentance, the Merciful. [7:148-156, 12:53. Baari = The Maker = Initiator = Originator = The Original Designer. Unfortunately, blindly following the account of Exodus (to say in all humility, correctly described in QXP 32:26-28), most ancient and modern commentators of the Qur'an, including Maududi of the 20th century, stumble on this verse as well. They maintain that the Israelites in a matter of hours killed one another randomly up to 70,000 men! Others claim that only the culprits were killed! All this confusion arises for giving literal meaning to Qatl and for blindly following some Biblical accounts and fabricated Hadith. This is all the more amazing since the same verse is showing Pardon from God to the Israelites for their worshiping of the calf. Qatl = Subdue = Bring low = Humiliate = Make humble = Killing the inflated or rebellious Ego = Qatl also means murder, slaying, fighting, but in different contexts]

2:55 And recall when you said, "O Moses! We will not believe in you unless we see God face to face!" Thereupon thunder struck you as you were looking on. [Your minds were still programmed with the primitive ways of the "Age of Worship" when humans could only appreciate the tangible. At that level of intellect, humans come to fear natural phenomena. Thus, when you saw the lightning thunder you almost fell dead in fright. 7:155]

2:56 Then We revived you, and raised you from a dead to a living nation so that you might show gratitude (by following the Divine Commands).

2:57 And We shaded you with Our grace and We bestowed upon you Our bounties in abundance, saying, "Partake of the decent things We have provided you." And they did not harm Us; but they had certainly harmed their own 'self'. [Zall = Shade. Ghamam = Clouds. Being shaded with clouds in the desert is a blessing, hence my rendition as grace. Manna-wus-Salwa = God's sustenance that reaches all members of the community equitably. Literally, it also means delicious fruit (Manna) and fowl or quail meat (Salwa). Tayyab = Decent and clean = Of one's

liking = Not forbidden in the Qur'an = Good for mind and body = Pleasant]

2:58 Then We commanded you, "Enter this town and enjoy the provisions therein, partake as you desire. But enter the gate with heart-felt humility, saying, "Hittatun." (O Our Lord! Pardon our misdeeds as we mend our ways). And We shall forgive you your faults and amply reward the doers of good." ['This town' = Can'aan = The land of Palestine. See 5:21, 7:161]

2:59 But, the transgressors altered the meaning of the word they had been given, and changed their attitude of humility and perseverance. So, We brought down upon the transgressors consequences from the sky for, they repeatedly drifted away from the commandments. [You became shaky in your resolve losing discipline and courage, therefore, the Promised Land became forbidden to you for forty years. 2:61, 3:21, 5:22-26]

Striking The Rock For Twelve Water Springs:

2:60 (Remember the times when you were in the Sinai desert) And Moses asked for water for his people. We said, "Strike the rock with your staff." And there gushed out twelve springs so that each tribe found its respective source of fresh cool water. Moses said, "Enjoy God's provision, but desist from becoming mischievous." ['Asa = Staff = Force = Conviction = Support = A united community holding on to a mission as the five fingers hold on to a cane. Moses was guided to rocks under which were hidden twelve springs of water ready to gush forth. With the strength of his conviction and with the help of his companions, Moses unclogged those springs. 7:160]

2:61 (At one stage you demanded Moses to provide you with a great variety of edibles, although you were living in the Sinai desert.) You said, "O Moses! We are weary of the same kind of food, so ask your Lord on our behalf to bring forth for us plant food such as herbs, cucumbers, garlic, lentils and onions." He said, "Would you exchange something superior for something inferior? (Return to slavery for petty desires instead of achieving higher goals?) Go back in shame to Egypt and you will get what you demand." So, humiliation and misery were stamped upon them and they had to face God's requital. That was because they

kept rejecting God's messages. And they persisted in opposing and even killing some Prophets against all right. They did all this, because they chose to rebel and went on transgressing.

2:63 (O Children of Israel) We accepted your solemn pledge, letting Mount Sinai tower above you as witness, and saying, "Hold fast onto what We have given you, and take to heart what is therein, so that you may live upright."

2:64 Then, even after that, you turned away. And were it not for the bounty of God upon you and His grace, you would have been undone.

Breaking Sabbath – Apish Mentality

2:65 You are well aware of those among you who broke the Sabbath, whereupon We said to them, "Be you held in contempt like apes!" [For social and ecological reasons and to inculcate the sanctity of the law in your hearts, We had commanded you to desist from fishing or working on Saturdays and to strengthen your social ties rather than going after business on that day (4:154, 7:163-167, 16:124). Persistent indiscipline is more befitting of an apish, rather than human mentality 4:47, 4:154, 5:60. Note: Strangely enough, some ancient, and even modern commentators like Maududi, maintain that they were physically transformed into apes!]

2:66 We made this degradation a lesson for them in their times, and for the future generations, We made it a source of enlightenment that should soften the hearts of those who seek to live upright. [Wa'z = Admonition that softens the hearts]

2:67 And remember, Moses said to his people, "Indeed, God commands you to sacrifice a cow." They said, "Do you mock us?" He replied, "I seek shelter with God from being among the ignorant who mock people." [Slaughter a cow to get rid of the Pharaoh's pagan inclinations you carry in your hearts. That is what prompted you to worship the golden calf. 2:54, 7:152]

Israelites Make Excuses:

2:68 (Now, they started making excuses.) They said, "Ask your Lord on our behalf to enlighten us as to what kind of a cow she is." He answered,

"Indeed, He says that she is a cow neither too old nor too young. She is between the two conditions. Do, then, as commanded."
2:69 (Then) they said, "Ask for us your Lord that He enlighten us as to what color she is." He answered, "He says that she is a yellow cow. Bright is her color, pleasing to beholders."

2:70 (Again) they said, "Call upon your Lord that He make it clear to us what exactly she is. To us all cows are much alike. If God so wills, we shall be rightly guided."

They Reluctantly Sacrifice The Cow:

2:71 He answered, "Indeed, He says it is to be a cow that has not toiled in tilling the land nor in watering the crops and it is whole and healthy, unblemished." They said, "Finally, you bring out a concrete description!" So they sacrificed her, although they would rather not have done it. [They still adored cow-worship and the golden calf. 2:93, 5:101]

2:72 Recall! A person was slain and you were casting blame on each other. So God brought forth what you were hiding.

2:73 We said, "Connect the pieces of evidence that each one of you has (and the case will be resolved). This is how God gives life to the dead. And He expounds His messages for you to use your common sense. [There is life for you in the law of Just Recompense. A law that deters murder and, thus, saves lives, in fact, gives you life 2:179. Another explanation: The Mosaic law, according to the Bible, ordains the sacrifice of a cow in cases of unsolved murder. The elders of the town wash their hands and say: "Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen it." The community is then absolved of the collective responsibility (Deuteronomy 21:1-9). In this particular instance the mystery was solved and the murderer was identified.]

Their Hearts Were Hardened:

2:74 Then, even after that, you persisted in defiance so much so that your hearts became hardened as rocks, impermeable to reason or even worse. For, there are rocks out of which streams gush forth, and there are rocks that split asunder so that streams flow from them. And yet there are rocks that become soft in awe of God. God is not unaware of what you

do. [Rocks may become soft according to Divine laws in nature. They are more compliant than the hearts that defy reason.]

2:75 Do you still hope that they will join your ranks in faith? A party among them used to listen to the Word of God in the Torah, then, distorted its words and true meanings, after they had understood it. And they knew full well what they were doing!

2:76 And when they meet with those who have attained belief, they say, "We have attained belief." But when they meet each other in private, they say, "Would you inform them (the Muslims) of what God has disclosed to you? Therewith they may engage you in argument before your Lord. Will you not, then, use your sense?" ['What God has disclosed to you' = "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your brethren – him you shall heed – I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him." Deuteronomy 18:15-18]

2:77 Do they not realize that God knows what they conceal and what they reveal?

2:78 Among them are unlettered people who do not know the scripture, but learn their wishful beliefs through hearsay. They depend on nothing but conjecture. [They go to their clergy saying, "What do we know of religion? So, you tell us." 2:79, 9:31]

Jewish Scholars Used To Write With Their Own Hands And Ascribe It To God:

2:79 Then, lost are those (their scholars) who write the scripture with their own hands and then claim, "This is from God." They traffic it for petty gains. And loss is to them for what they write, and for the illicit profits they make thereby."
[In the name of religion, they exploit the masses, feeling unduly proud as they peddle the false notion of them being "the chosen ones". Furthermore, they extort money from the ignorant.]

2:80 Yet they say, "The fire will not touch us but for a few numbered days." Say, "Have you received a promise from God? – For, God never

breaks His promise. Or is it that you say things about God that you have no knowledge of?"

Dwellers Of the Fire:

2:81 Nay, but those who disrupt the lives of others, and their crimes surround them, are the rightful dwellers of the fire. Therein they will abide.

Dwellers Of Paradise:

2:82 And those who choose to be graced with belief, and do acts of benevolence; those are the rightful dwellers of Paradise. Therein they will abide.

Covenant From The Children of Israel:

2:83 (God never promised unconditional favors to any nation, the Children of Israel being no exception.) And remember when We took a Covenant from the Children of Israel,

- "Serve none but God,
- Be generous to your parents,
- And to family and relatives,
- To orphans, widows, and those left without any means of support to make progress in the society,
- To those who have suffered loss of income, the disabled, the needy, and the poor,
- Speak to people kindly,
- And treat them nicely,
- Help establish the Divinely Prescribed System of Life (Salaat)
- And set up the Economic Order of Zakaat."

Then, after that, you slid back, except a few of you. And you turn away from these commandments even now.

2:84 And watch out! We accepted your solemn pledge that you would desist from mutual bloodshed, and from evicting your own people from your townships. This is what you agreed to and you were witnesses to it.

2:85 Yet it is you who subdue and slay your own people, and evict a weak faction among you from their homes. And you support one another in hurting the community and sowing the seeds of discord. And when these homeless people get enslaved by others and are brought to

you, you ransom them, whereas it was unlawful for you to evict them in the first place. What! Do you wish to accept one part of the scripture and reject the other? Think then, what the reward of such wrongdoing must be – nothing but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection the most grievous chastisement. God is not unaware of what you do.

17:101 (We have been sending Prophets for the reformation of this mentality.) We gave to Moses nine clear messages. Ask then, the Children of Israel what happened when he came to them and Pharaoh said to him, "Surely, O Moses! I think you are bewitched."

7:32 Say, "Who is there to forbid the beauty and aesthetic niceties that God has brought forth for His servants, and the good things of sustenance?" Say, "On the Day of Resurrection, these things will be only for those who chose to believe in Divine laws during the life of this world." Thus do We detail Our messages for people who make use of what they learn. [17

Nine Commandments … Graven Images Of The Bible Not Mentioned In The Qur'an:

6:151 Say, "Come, let me convey to you what your Sustainer has enjoined upon you as a sacred duty: i. Associate none with Him. ii. Honor your parents, treat them kindly and fulfill their needs. iii. Neither kill your children for fear of poverty nor deprive them of proper training and education. We provide for you and for them. (The Divine System will take care of your needs and their needs.) iv. Do not come near immodesty or indecent deeds, whether openly or secretly. v. Do not slay a life - life that God has made sacred - except in the course of justice. All this He has commanded you so that you may use your intelligence and reflect on it with wisdom." [17:31]

6:152 God commands you further: vi. Do not approach the wealth of the orphan except to improve it until they come of age with full maturity of body and mind. vii. Give full weight and full measure in all your dealings. Uphold justice in all aspects of your life. Our commands are meant to widen your human potential. We do not assign any 'self' responsibility beyond its means. viii. And when you voice an opinion, be just, even if it is against a relative. ix. Fulfill your Covenant with God, the

unwavering allegiance to the Divine System. This He commands for you to bear in mind. [1:4-5, 9:111]

Instant Gratification:

2:86 These are the ones who buy instant gratification in exchange for Eternity. The logical consequence of this trade is relentless suffering in a state of utter helplessness. [Numerous verses underscore the point that the Law of Cause and Effect has no room for making amends in the Hereafter, therefore, the helplessness. Duniya = This world = Immediate gains = Short term benefits = Short-sightedness = Disregarding the Law of Cause and Effect = Forsaking the Future. Aakhirah = Hereafter = Life to come = Eternity = Long term = Far-sightedness = Future = Logical outcome = Tomorrow as built on today]

Scripture To Moses And A Succession Of Prophets:

2:87 We gave the scripture to Moses, and after him We sent a succession of Messengers. And We gave Jesus, son of Mary (Maryam), clear evidence of the truth and We strengthened him with Gabriel (Jibraeel). Yet, is it not the case that whenever a Messenger came to you with messages that did not conform to your desires, you resorted to self-glorification? And some of them you called impostors, and others you killed or tried to subdue. [Also, you attempted to strike a deal with the Messengers to alter the revelations. 10:15, 11:113, 17:74, 68:9; Roohul Qudus = Gabriel 2:87, 2:253, 5:110, 16:2, 16:102, 26:193, 42:52]

2:88 And they say, "Our hearts are bags of knowledge." Nay, but God has deprived them of His grace for their persistent rejection of the truth. Therefore, only a few of them will choose to believe. [2:6. La'nah = Curse = Deprivation of God's grace = God's rejection = Condemnation = Losing citizenship of the Islamic State = To be downgraded = Abasement = Lasting humiliation]

Denial And An Awful Price:

2:89 Whenever revelation from God is delivered to them, confirming (the truth in) what they have, they flatly deny it! Yet, before that, they had been praying for winning the hearts of those who denied all Divine revelation. And now that a message has come to them that they very well recognize, they deny it and conceal (what they know). God's condemnation is the due of all those who turn ungrateful. [Kufr =

Rejecting, denying, opposing, or concealing the truth = Ingratitude. 2:101, 2:41, 7:157]

2:90 Awful is the price for which they sell their own 'self'. They reject what God has revealed, complaining grudgingly as to why God should bestow His bounty of revelation to whomever He may elect among His servants! Thus, (for their bias) they have experienced wrath upon wrath (bitter consequences of their misdeeds). And for all those who oppose the truth, the logical consequence is a humiliating suffering.

2:91 When it is said to them, "Believe in what God has revealed", they say, "We only accept what has been sent to us." And they reject all besides that, even though it is the truth confirming what they possess. Say, "(If you claim to believe in the scripture that you have), then why did you oppose and even slay the Prophets of God before, if you were believers?" [2:101. For Qatl, see 2:54]

2:92 Moses came to you with all evidence of the truth, yet you worshiped the golden calf in his absence! You did, thus, exchange the Right with the Wrong and hurt yourselves.

Love Of The Golden Calf:

2:93 Recall again that We accepted your solemn pledge, with Mount Sinai towering above you, as witness, "Hold fast to what We have given you, and listen with your hearts!" They (your elite) said, "We hear and we disobey." (The desire to worship a tangible deity was so intense in them that) their hearts were infused with the love of the golden calf. This led them to persistently refuse to acknowledge the truth. Say, "Evil is what your faith enjoins on you if you have any faith at all." [It teaches you to go back to the primitive ways of worshiping tangible objects!]
Longevity Does Not Protect Against Dire Consequences:

2:96 Of all mankind, you will find them the most ardently desirous of a long life; even more than the idolaters. Every one of them would love to live a thousand years. Yet, the grant of longevity will not save him from the dire consequences of his transgressions. God is Seer of all that they do.

2:97 (They are displeased with Gabriel for bringing revelation to a gentile Prophet. 2:90.) Say (O Prophet), "Who could possibly bear a grudge against Gabriel when he has revealed (the Qur'an) upon your heart by God's leave, confirming what was revealed before it. And it (the Qur'an) is a beacon of light and glad tiding for all those who accept it. [2:101]

2:101 And now that a Messenger has come to them from God confirming the truth in what they have, a party among those who were given the scripture before, cast the Book of God (the Bible) behind their backs as though they are unaware of what it says (concerning the advent of Prophet Muhammad).

What The Bible Says About The Advent Of Prophet Muhammad:

Deuteronomy:

18:15 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me [Moses]; unto him ye shall hearken;
18:18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Show Us God:

4:153 (O Prophet) People of the Scripture ask you to bring a published book from the heaven. They made a greater demand to Moses when they said, "Show us God face to face." And their psyche was such that when a bolt of lightning struck around them, they fell in fear. They had chosen to do wrong. After that, they chose the calf for worship although they had seen the Manifest truth. Yet, We pardoned them and gave Moses evident authority (for their guidance).

O Moses! Make A God For Us:

7:138 After they crossed the sea (into Sinai 2:50-51), the Children of Israel passed by some people who were worshiping statues. They said, 'O Moses! Make a god for us, like the gods they have." Moses said, "You are a people who wish to lurk in darkness.

7:139 What these idol worshipers are doing is senseless and vain.

7:140 Shall I seek a god for you other than God, when He has blessed you more than the other existing nations?"

7:141 Also remember when We saved you from Pharaoh's people. They persecuted you (by assigning hard labor and) with a dreadful torment. They slaughtered your sons and let your women live (for slavery and shameful acts). That was a great tribulation, a test from your Lord Supreme. [2:49, 28:4][In addition to killing the newborn boys, as a matter of state policy, Pharaoh humiliated the strong and left the vulnerable for slavery and shameful acts. 'Abna' = Sons = Strong ones. 'Nisaa' = Females = Women = Derivatively, the weak ones. 'Yastahyoon' carries the connotation of 'letting live' as well as 'in shame'. A tyrannical system has little tolerance for men of courage. 27:34, 28:4-5, 40:25. Exodus 1:15-22]

Moses Summoned For Forty Nights:

7:142 We summoned Moses for thirty nights and completed them by adding ten. Thus We completed the term with His Lord, forty nights. Before leaving for Mount Sinai, Moses assigned his brother Aaron, as his deputy and told him to keep social order after him and not to be intimidated by trouble makers.

The Sacred Land:

5:21 O My people! Enter the Sacred Land that God has decreed for you, as long as you hold fast to His laws. But, if you turn back in flight, you will be overthrown to your own ruin." [Sacred Land = Can'aan = Syria-Palestine.]

5:22 They said to Moses, "In this land there are ferocious people. Never shall we enter it until they leave. If they leave, then we will enter."

Two Daring Men:

5:23 Then two men who feared violating God's command, and whom God had blessed, said, "Enter the gate daringly, and you will be in command of the situation and will be victorious. Put your trust in God if you are believers." [The two men were Joshua and Caleb. Bible; Numbers 14: 6-30]

5:24 They said, "O Moses! We shall never enter the land while they are in it. You and your Lord should go and fight, while we sit here."

5:25 Moses said, "My Lord! I have power only over myself and my brother, allow us to part ways from those who keep drifting away from the commands."

Sacred Land Forbidden For Forty Years:

5:26 Their Lord said, "This land will be forbidden for them for forty years. They will wander on earth, bewildered. So grieve not over these people who keep drifting away from the right path."

Moses Sent To Pharaoh:

7:103 We sent Moses to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our revelations and they degraded them. Now see the consequence for the corrupters.

7:104 Moses said, "O Pharaoh! I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds.

7:105 It is incumbent upon me that I say about God nothing but the truth. I come to you with clear evidence of the truth from your Lord. So let the Children of Israel go with me."

7:106 Pharaoh said, "If you have come with clear evidence, produce it if you are of the truthful."

Moses Presents His Case With Confidence:

7:107 Moses presented his argument that he held fast, with vibrant confidence and logic.

7:108 The strength of his conviction shone bright to those present. [20:17-21]

7:109 The chiefs of Pharaoh's nation said, "This is some knowing wizard!

7:110 It appears to us that Moses, after gaining some following, plans to throw you out of your land." Said Pharaoh, "Now, what do you advise?"

7:111 (After consulting) they said, "Put him and his brother off for a while and send to the cities men to summon.

The Master Debaters:

7:112 To bring all master debaters to your court." [Saahir from Sihr = Magician, liar, stunningly eloquent, smart poet, deceitful, trickster, cheater, defrauder, dodger, hoaxer, swindler.]

7:113 The master debaters came to Pharaoh. They said, "There will be reward for us if we are victors."

7:114 He answered, "Yes, and you will be among those who are close to me."

7:115 The debaters said, "O Moses! Either you begin or let us be the first to present our case."

7:116 Moses asked them to begin. When they began they cast a spell on the people's eyes, and struck them with awe, and stunned the assembly with their spellbinding eloquence.

Moses Responds With Conviction And Prevails:

7:117 So, We inspired Moses, "Respond with conviction. And then see how it swallows their deceptive rhetoric." ['Asaa = Staff = Cane = Strength = Conviction = Authority = Power = Strong logic = Convincing argument.]

7:118 The truth prevailed and their arguments were manifestly proven false.

7:119 Thus, they were defeated right there and humiliated.

7:120 The debaters fell down prostrate.

7:121 They were convinced and said, "We believe in the Lord of the Worlds.

7:122 The Lord of Moses and Aaron."

Debaters Fell Prostrate But Pharaoh Got Annoyed:

7:123 Pharaoh got annoyed, "You believe in Him before I give you permission! This is a political conspiracy you all have made up in the

city, so that you get my subjects out on the streets in rebellion and topple the government. You will see the punishment very soon.

7:124 I will immobilize you in handcuffs and fetters. Then I will crucify every one of you."
7:125 They responded, "We are determined to turn to our Lord.

7:126 Do you take vengeance on us simply because we believed in the revelations of our Lord when they came to us? Our Lord! Bestow on us steadfastness and let us die as submitters."

7:127 The chiefs among Pharaoh's people said, "Will you allow Moses and his people to create disorder in the land, and forsake your rule and your gods?" He said, "We will slay their sons and spare their women. We are in power over them."

Patience And Perseverance:

7:128 Moses assured his people, "Seek help in God and patiently persevere. Remember that the earth belongs to God. He grants it as a heritage to His servants according to His laws. And the ultimate end belongs to the upright."

7:129 Fearing persecution they said, "We suffered before you came to us and after you have come to us." Moses said, "Your Lord will annihilate your enemy, and you will inherit the earth. Then He will see what kind of works you do."

The Unjust System Begins To Waver:

7:130 The unjust system of Pharaoh and his people began to waver (7:94). When Our requital struck them with famine, and scanty crop (they found themselves ill prepared for the relief efforts). They should have stopped to think.

7:131 (Instead of reflecting and taking corrective action, they sought the easy way out.) All good that came along, they ascribed it to their own worthiness, and any affliction that struck them, they blamed it on the bad omen of Moses and his companions. Most people do not know that there is no such thing as a bad omen or a good omen. People determine

their destiny according to God's laws. In that sense, then, omens are with God alone.

7:132 They kept telling Moses, "Whatever the verses might say, whatever bad omens you could bring, or bewitch us with your logic, we will not believe in you."

7:133 Their System was too inefficient to fight off natural calamities, such as, floods, swarms of locusts, and diseases of crops, livestock and humans. These were open signs for them to wake up to reform, but Pharaoh and his chiefs were too arrogant to accept responsibility, and too involved in luxury to take action. They were guilty of misrule.

7:134 (The irrational Egyptians continued to remain sunken in superstition.) Whenever hardship struck, they turned to Moses for prayer stating that God had a pledge with him, and promising that they would believe and let the Children of Israel go with him. [They did not understand that the pledge of God with His Messengers was only that of obeying His commands and His blessings in return. It did not involve any supernatural phenomena such as miracles.]

7:135 When the hardship ran its course according to Our laws, they would break their promise with Moses.

The Ultimate Requital:

7:136 So, We sent Our requital on them and drowned them in the sea, for they had been denying Our messages and remained heedless.

The Oppressed People Inherit The Land Of Abundance:

7:137 We made the oppressed people inherit the east and the west of the land that We had blessed with abundant provision. The commands of your Lord were fulfilled for the Children of Israel to reward them for their steadfastness. Pharaoh and his people eventually met destruction for violating Our laws. And We leveled to the ground (the great works and fine buildings, temples, palaces, tombs, statues and stately) structures of all kinds that Pharaoh and his people had built with so much skill and pride. [The Children of Israel later inherited a sizeable and highly prosperous kingdom including Syria and Palestine under David and Solomon.]

The Lord Manifests His Glory:

7:143 When Moses arrived at the appointed time, and his Lord spoke to him, Moses said, "My Lord! Give me the power to better perceive You." His Lord said, "You will not perceive Me unless you look pensively at the mountain. If it remains firm in its place, then shall you perceive Me." (You will realize that even a single mountain is made of countless particles that were scattered as dust and it is your Lord Who has made it stand firm.) Thus did his Lord choose for the mountain to be a manifestation of His Glory. Moses pictured the mountain as dust and was stunned! When he recovered his senses, he said, "Infinite are You in Your glory! I turn to you repentant and I am among the foremost believers." [The 7,359 feet high Mount Sinai is standing to this day. Therefore, contrary to popular literal translation of this verse, its understanding in allegorical terms is preferred. Also, a Prophet of God is least likely to make a demand to see God in physical form. See 2:55, 2:118, 7:155. Now let us suppose that it was some other mountain that had crumbled to dust. In that case, the place would most certainly have become the greatest historical relic of all times. As I have stated in preface to QXP, the earliest Tafseers of the Qur'an were written centuries after the exalted Prophet. By then the Ajami (Zoroastrian-Persian, alien) politics and culture dominated the Islamic Empire centered in Baghdad. It is a hard fact of the historical dynamics that the rulers' political supremacy profoundly affects the culture and language of the entire nation. Just as an example, Khalifa Haroon Rasheed's mother Khaizran was a Zoroastrian (Parsi or Maggian), and so were his wives. Khaizran's son, the succeeding Khalifa Mamoon's wives were also Ajami. Even the Baramakah, the viziers of the Empire were Ajamis. So, the Zoroa-Persian concepts left a very heavy impact on the Arabic language, giving Ajami (alien) concepts even to the Qur'anic themes and terminology – so much so that they became Ma'roof (generally recognized and well-accepted). Let us see how our clergy handled this verse. They had the unchangeable Qur'an before them, but the concepts they adopted were foreign and pliable like wax. A Hadith was concocted in the name of the exalted Messenger. Here it is as related by a recent Mullah: "The Prophet, after reciting this verse (7:143), placed his thumb on the little finger and said that only this much of the light of God had touched the mountain. Therefore, only that much portion (the size of a little finger) of the mountain was affected." – Ma'arifil Qur'an, Mufti Aazam (the Chief Mufti) of Pakistan, 'Maulana' Mufti Muhammad Shafi; tafseer of 7:143

vol 4 – quoting Anas bin Malik from the ancient Tirmizi, Hanbal and Hakam. Whoever made up this Hadith forgot that the wrong Ajami translations talk of the whole mountain crumbling to dust!]

Enlightenment And Clear Guidance:

7:144 God said, "O Moses! I have chosen you, out of all people, with My messages and by speaking to you. Therefore, take what I have given you and be among the grateful."

7:145 We ordained for him, in the Tablets of law, Enlightenment and clearly spelled out guidance. And told him, "Uphold these teachings strongly, and tell your people to uphold them. These are excellent teachings. I will soon let you and your people see (how blessed the end of compliance will be and) to which abode the drifters will be headed." [39:18]

7:146 Even if they went through the entire script, and saw clear evidence of the truth, their arrogance will keep them from believing. When they see the right guidance, they do not accept it, but they readily accept straying. This is because they choose to deny Our revelations and remain unaware of the wisdom in them.

7:147 Those who deny Our messages and the meeting of the Hereafter, their works are fruitless. Are they rewarded anything but what they deserved for their decisions? [Human beings should remember that every action has a consequence and it gets imprinted on the 'self'. While every tomorrow is the Aakhirah (after) of today, the final Judgment and Recompense for us rests with the life to come.]

7:148 The people of Moses made up a calf out of their ornaments while Moses was at the Mount Sinai. They made it such that blowing into it produced a lowing sound. They did not even see that it could not talk to them or show them any path. Still they chose it as a god, and thus wronged their own 'self'.

7:149 When they regretted their action and realized that they had gone astray, they said, "Unless our Lord have mercy on us and forgive us, we will be lost."

Moses Returns From Mount Sinai:

7:150 Moses returned to his people and was upset and grieved. He said, “You have chosen a terrible thing after me. Do you wish your Lord’s requital to smite you soon? He put down the tablets of the commands among them and questioned his brother, Aaron, very strictly. Aaron explained, "O Son of my mother! These people treated me harshly and took my patience as weakness, and almost killed me. Let not my opponents rejoice, and do not count me among the wrongdoers."

7:151 Moses said, “My Lord! Forgive me and my brother and admit us in Your grace. Of all the merciful ones, You are the Most Merciful.”

7:152 Those who chose the calf for worship, were seized by their Lord’s Law of Requital, and faced humiliation in the life of this world. Thus do We recompense those who invent lies.

7:153 Those who have done ill deeds, but then repent and attain belief, for them, afterward, God is Forgiving, Merciful.

7:154 When Moses calmed down, he picked up the tablets, on which was inscribed merciful guidance for those who fear violating the law of their Lord.

7:155 Then, Moses selected seventy of his people for Our place of meeting. When they were seized with violent quaking, he said, “My Lord! You could have destroyed them and me long before, if You so willed. Would You destroy us for the actions of the foolish ones among us? This must be Your trial. By such trials, You let go astray those who will to go astray, and You guide those who will to be guided. You are our Protector. So, forgive us and grant us mercy. You are the Best of forgivers.

Who is Paracletos – Periclytos – Mawhamana?

7:157 (Now the law has been revealed to Prophet Muhammad.) Follow the Messenger, the Prophet who is a non-Israelite, and who was unlettered before the revelation (29:48). They find him well described* in the Torah and the Gospel with them. He enjoins upon them the Right, and forbids them the Wrong. He declares lawful all good things, and declares unlawful only the unclean things. He relieves people from the

burdens they carried. He breaks the shackles of mental and physical slavery that they used to carry, and brings them out from darkness to light (5:15-16, 65:11, 76:4). Those who believe in him, honor him, support him, and follow the light that has come with him, are the eternally successful. *[Deuteronomy: 18:15-18. Gospel of John: 14:16, 15:26, 16:7 Paracletos = Comforter, from original Greek Periclytos = The praised one. In Aramaic, Mawhamana = The praised one.]

The Twelve Tribes:

7:160 We set up twelve tribal communities among the Israelites (for effective administration). When his people asked for water, We revealed to Moses, "Strike the rock with your staff!" And twelve springs gushed forth from there. Each group knew its own place of water. We gave them the shade of clouds, and manna and quails, saying, "Eat of the good things We have provided you." (After a time, the corrupters in that wonderful society started dissenting.) They did not harm Us, but they did harm their own 'self'. [Remember the times when they were in the Sinai desert and there was shortage of water. Moses asked for water for his people and God guided him to a rock under which were hidden twelve springs of water ready to gush forth. Moses, with the strength of his conviction and with the help of his companions, unclogged those springs and each of the twelve tribes found their respective source of fresh cool water. Moses had established the Divine System of life. God will open the blessings of the heavens and earth for any nation that accepts His laws and works for the collective good of humanity. Such abundance with equity is no less than a heavenly "Table spread" that ensures freedom from want for all, in the shadow of Divine grace. They enjoyed delicious bird meat and vegetation they had grown in the oasis of their own making.

7:161 And remember it was said to them, "Dwell in this town (Palestine 5:21) and enjoy the provisions as you wish. Enter the gate humbly and say, 'Hittatun', 'Our Lord! Absolve our misdeeds as we mend our ways.' Then do what you say and We shall forgive you your misdeeds. We increase the reward for the doers of good."

7:162 But, some of the wrongdoers began changing the Word of God that was taught to them, and displaced it with their own fabrications. (They

became disobedient). So, We caused them to weaken and waver, for they violated the commands.

Fishing:

7:163 Ask the Israelites about the township (Elat) that was located by the sea, and they had violated the Sabbath. Fish used to come on the surface in abundance on their day of Sabbath, feeling secure, and did not come up on other days. (But the community failed to persevere, and broke the Sabbath to get a good catch.) Thus We tested them to see for themselves how they drift away from discipline.

7:164 The kind-hearted among them kept reminding the violators. And others said, "Why do you preach a people whom God's requital is going to destroy or punish them with a severe torment?" The counselors said, "In order to be free of guilt before your Lord that we failed to advise – And in the hope that they live upright."

Humiliation For Disregard Of Reminders:

7:165 When they disregarded the reminders, We saved the ones who admonished them, and punished those who transgressed and drifted away from the command.

7:166 As they persisted with their rebellious behavior, Our law caused their disposition take a downward turn and they developed apish mentality. We told them, "Be the living symbols of humiliation."

7:167 And remember, your Lord proclaimed that He would raise against them until the Day of Resurrection, people who will persecute them. Your Lord is Swift in retribution, yet any people who mend their ways, will find Him Forgiving, Merciful.

Scattered As Communities:

7:168 And We scattered them into different communities throughout the earth. Among them some are righteous, and some are opposite. Through the turns of history We have caused them to experience easy and difficult times, in order that they might return to Our laws.

7:169 But, the succeeding generations that inherited the scripture, did no better. They became more materialistic, falling for instant gains. Yet, they

insist, "We will be forgiven, and would not have to account for it." And they keep longing for material gains. Didn't they promise to uphold the scripture, and not to say about God but the truth? And they have studied the commands in it! The long-term benefit and the abode of the Hereafter are better for those who deal justly with people and live upright. Will you not use sense?

Pharaoh's Eloquent Debaters, Again:

10:79 Pharaoh said, "Bring all eloquent debaters to me."

10:80 And when they came, Moses said to them, "Begin with your presentation."

10:81 When they finished with their arguments, Moses said, "Your reasoning is totally flawed. God proves it false through His laws. God will annihilate the political and social systems that promote corruption, disorder and bloody feuds.

10:82 God will always vindicate the truth by His laws, even though the guilty may hate it. [Societies will flourish only when they embrace the Permanent Value System. The guilty that are used to thriving on the toil of others, will hate equity]

10:83 Only a few of the Egyptians, some youngsters, could proclaim belief in Moses because of the fear of Pharaoh and his chiefs. Pharaoh was a most arrogant tyrant on earth. He used to exceed the limits.

Trust In God:

10:84 Moses said, "O My people! If you do believe in God, then place your trust in Him – if you have truly surrendered to Him.

10:87 We revealed to Moses and his brother, "Tell your people: Maintain your homes in Egypt, and turn them into centers of devotion and training. Establish the commandments in your lives and give good news to the believers."

10:88 He prayed, "Our Lord! You have given Pharaoh and his chiefs a life of luxury and abundance. Our Lord! With their resources and might they continue with their oppression and lead people astray from Your

path. Our Lord! Destroy their riches and make their faculties incapable of contriving their oppressive designs. They will not see the truth unless they face an awful suffering."

10:89 God said, "Your prayer is heard. Both of you shall remain determined. And you shall not follow the path of those who act without comprehending."

Pharaoh Surrenders – What? Now!

10:90 We brought the Children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh with his armies pursued them in rage and bitter enmity. When Pharaoh was drowning, he cried out, "I believe that there is no god but the One in Whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender."

10:91 What? Now! You rebelled ardently all your life. You committed bloody crimes on earth.

Pharaoh's Body Preserved – A Lesson For Generations:

10:92 Nay, but this day We will preserve your body so that you may remain a lesson for generations to come. A great many of mankind remain heedless of Our signs. [The Pharaoh's body was only discovered during the excavations of 1898. Today it is on display in the Royal Mummies Chamber of the Egyptian Museum.]

10:93 Thereafter, We assigned to the Children of Israel an honorable dwelling place, and gave them decent provision. But they began to hold divergent views and divided themselves despite the knowledge (of revelation). Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection regarding wherein they differed.

11:96 We sent Moses with Our revelations and a manifest authority (of self-evident truth).

11:97 To Pharaoh and his chiefs. They followed only the command of Pharaoh, and his command never led right.

11:98 Pharaoh will go before his people on the Day of Resurrection, and lead them into the fire. What a miserable place to land!

11:99 Divine rejection was made to follow them in this world and will overcome them on the Resurrection Day. Contemptible is the gift that will be given to them.

CHAPTER -16

PROPHET AARON (HAROON)

Prophet Aaron is mentioned in the Qur'an alongside Moses since they were together in their mission, that of liberating Israelites from the clutches of Pharaoh and his people.

25:35 Recall that We gave Moses the scripture, and appointed his brother Aaron as minister to him.

25:36 Then We said, "Go you both to the people who reject Our messages." Then We annihilated them with a complete annihilation.

Aaron was the brother of Prophet Moses. Prophets Moses and Aaron lived about 1400 BC. Both brothers were sent to Pharaoh and his people in Egypt and successfully liberated the Israelites from bondage. [Bible, Exodus 6:20 "And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses …" The Qur'an does not blame Amram of committing this incest.]

As mentioned earlier, the honored Messengers of God, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were descendants of the Patriarch, Abraham. Prophet Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, was also called Israel. Jews are known as Israelites in reference to Jacob (Israel). 'Imran (Amram) is the name of the father of Moses and Aaron, and also of a branch among Israelites. Mary, the mother of Jesus, belonged to the progeny of 'Imran. She was a descendant of Prophet Aaron. The mother of Moses was the wife of Amram (Imran). They had three children: Miriam, Aaron and Moses in that order.

Aaron As Deputy To Moses:

7:142 We summoned Moses for thirty nights and completed them by adding ten. Thus We completed the term with His Lord, forty nights. Before leaving for Mount Sinai, Moses assigned his brother Aaron, as his deputy and told him to keep social order after him and not to be intimidated by trouble makers.

7:148 The people of Moses made up a calf out of their ornaments while Moses was at the Mount Sinai. They made it such that blowing into it produced a lowing sound. They did not even see that it could not talk to them or show them any path. Still they chose it as a god, and thus wronged their own 'self'.

7:149 When they regretted their action and realized that they had gone astray, they said, "Unless our Lord have mercy on us and forgive us, we will be lost."

When Moses Returns From Mount Sinai:

7:150 Moses returned to his people and was upset and grieved. He said, "You have chosen a terrible thing after me. Do you wish your Lord's requital to smite you soon? He put down the tablets of the commands among them and questioned his brother, Aaron, very strictly. Aaron explained, "O Son of my mother! These people treated me harshly and took my patience as weakness, and almost killed me. Let not my opponents rejoice, and do not count me among the wrongdoers." [20:86. Seizing the beard and head is indicative of interrogating harshly. Aaron had been extra patient with their idolatry to avoid division among them (20:94). Aaron, the Prophet of God, preferred Shirk over Sectarianism. This is how reprehensible sectarianism and division is in religion.]

7:151 Moses said, "My Lord! Forgive me and my brother and admit us in Your grace. Of all the merciful ones, You are the Most Merciful."

7:152 Those who chose the calf for worship, were seized by their Lord's Law of Requital, and faced humiliation in the life of this world. Thus do We recompense those who invent lies.

The Influence Of As-Saamiri:

20:86 Moses returned to his people in a state of anger and sorrow. He said, "O My people! Did not your Lord make a handsome promise to you? Did, then, the fulfillment of this promise seem to you too long in coming? Or did you wish that your Lord's requital come upon you, and so you broke your promise to me?"

20:87 They said, "We intended to break no promises. But this is what happened. We were loaded with the sinful burdens of the (Egyptian

people's) ornament, and so we threw them into the fire, as suggested by this As-Saamiri."

20:88 Then As-Saamiri made the effigy of a calf. It even brought forth a lowing sound with wind or when blown into it. So they said, "This is your god, and the god of Moses, but he has forgotten." [As-Saamiri was not a Sumerian. He originally hailed from northern India. Babu Rajindra's treatise "Casting of a Caste" shows Saamiri belonging to India's 'Untouchables'. Fed up with apartheid, he tried to lay down the foundation of a new mixed caste that could socialize with all four castes of Hinduism. Consequently, he was exiled by the powerful Brahmins and ended up in Egypt and later followed Moses in the Exodus. Cow worship was running in his blood stream. Side by side, the golden calf of the Israelites symbolized the centuries old Egyptian influence. The Egyptians used to worship the 'sacred' bull APIS who was considered to be a god-incarnate. The soul of the sacred bull upon death was supposed to transmigrate into another idol called Osiris whom they worshiped as God's son. Recall Uzayr mentioned in the Qur'an (9:30). Some Jews in Arabia, still under the influence of ancient Egyptian traditions during the times of the exalted Messenger, used to believe in Uzayr or Osiris the Bull-god as God's son.]

The Golden Calf:

20:89 They knew full well that, like all false deities, the golden calf could not respond to queries, and had no control over their harm or benefit.

20:90 And Aaron had told them beforehand, "O My people! You are being tempted to evil by this idol. But your only Lord is the Beneficent! Follow me then, and obey my order!" [Exodus 32:1-5, on the contrary, declares Prophet Aaron guilty of making and worshiping the calf!]

20:91 They said, "We will by no means cease worshiping it until Moses comes back to us."

20:92 When he returned, Moses asked, "O Aaron! What stopped you when you saw them going astray?

20:93 That you followed me not? Didn't you disobey my order?"

20:94 Aaron said, "O Son of my mother! Do not get mad at me, and do not treat me harshly. I feared that you would say, “You have let the Children of Israel divide into parties and sects." [Moses accepted this explanation since sectarianism is no less a crime than idol worship in any form. Seizing the beard and head pertains to harsh interrogation. 7:150]

Moses Turns To Saamiri:

20:95 Moses now turned to Saamiri, “What do you have to say O Saamiri?”

20:96 He answered, "I saw what they did not see. So I took a handful (of dust) from the footprint of the Messenger, and cast it away (into the calf). This is what my mind prompted me to do.”

20:97 Moses said, "Go away then, for good! In this life it is for you to say, “Touch me not!” And moreover you have a promise that will not fail. Now, look at your god to whom you were so devoted. Surely, we will burn it and scatter its ashes far and wide over the sea.” [‘Untouchable’: People will consider him untouchable as before. Moses wanted his people to see the powerlessness of false deities and their potential to divide humanity.]

The Only Deity is God:

20:98 "The only deity of you all is God. There is no god but He. And He embraces all things within His knowledge."

37:120 Peace and salutation to Moses and Aaron!

God Rewards The Benefactors Of Humanity:

37:121 This is how We reward the benefactors of humanity.

37:122 Both of them were Our believing servants.

CHAPTER - 17

PROPHET JOB (AYUB)

Hazrat Ayub (Job) was probably the son of Hazrat Shoaib's younger daughter. The elder one was married to Moses. The Bible assigns a whole book to him. Most of the Book of Job comprises of his discourse with three of his friends with whom he untiringly shares his tremendous grief. God was proud of Job's righteousness, so once the Satan challenged God. Satan said that if God allowed him to touch Job, he would make Job undergo such great suffering that the man would curse and blaspheme God right on His face. God allows him to touch Job and severe afflictions befall him. Even his best friends become tired of listening to his grievances for months. The Book of Job is the most eloquent book of the Bible. Indeed, his repeated descriptions of his suffering, complaints to God and arguments with his friends seem to be a classic of tragedy.

The Qur'an makes a brief but powerful mention of Job highlighting his perseverance, steadfastness and trust in God under very trying circumstances. Shayitaan (Satan) in Arabic also means a serpent. According to the accurately translated Qur'anic narrative, Job was bitten by a snake, and not touched by Satan.

21:83 Job called unto his Lord, "Affliction has befallen me, but You are the Most Merciful of the merciful." [38:41. He was lost away from his people.]

21:84 We responded to him and relieved his agony from which he suffered. We re-united him with his people, and his followers had doubled in the meantime. That was grace from Us, and a thing to be commemorated by all those who serve Us.

38:41 And remember Our servant Job, when he called upon his Lord, "The serpent has bitten me and I am in distress and suffering." ['Satan has touched me', as a metonym = Serpent has bitten me. Satan also denotes Serpent in the Bible and other ancient writings. Job was left alone from his caravan and family.]

38:42 (He was told), “Strike the ground with your foot (move away a little bit). And here is cool water to wash with and a refreshing drink.”
38:43 And We gave him back his family and followers and, in time, doubled their numbers as a grace from Us. And herein is a reminder for people of understanding (on the virtue of patience). [At this point, we read weird stories that his one dozen children had died and two dozens 'new' children were given to him in exchange. That is too many labor pains for his aging wife! Ah! The poor woman. And then every child being a unique presence is irreplaceable.]

38:44 (And finally We told him,) “Now gather your strength and travel the land and do not break your pledge.” We found him steadfast. How excellent a servant! In every situation he turned to Our laws. [Hold the grass in your hand and strike with it = Collect your senses and go ahead on your Mission. Under Biblical influence, some ‘experts’ have interpreted this verse to mean that Prophet Job is being commanded to strike his wife with one hundred stripes or a broomstick with a hundred twigs, since she had asked her husband to curse God for his afflictions!]

CHAPTER -18

PROPHET EZEKIEL (ZAL-KIFL)

Ezekiel was one of the Israelite Tribal Prophets in the 6th century BC. The 26th book of the Old Testament is devoted to him. Prophet Ezekiel conveys the Lord's commands, grievous threats and prophecies to his people. Ezekiel 18:20 highlights the cardinal principle that everyone is responsible for their own actions and no soul can bear the load of another. He "prophesied" for 22 years.

21:85 Also remember Ishmael, Enoch (Idrees) and Ezekiel (Zal-Kifl), all were among the steadfast.

21:86 And so We admitted them in Our grace, for, they were men of quality.

38:48 Also mention Ishmael, Al-Yasa' (Elisha), and Zal-Kifl (Ezekiel). For, all of them were foremost in serving humanity.

CHAPTER - 19

PROPHET DAVID (DAUD)

He lived between 1040 and 970 BC, a Judean royal dynasty called the "House of David".

The Children of Israel established a sizeable and highly prosperous kingdom including Syria and Palestine under David and his son Solomon.

Mountain Tribes:

34:10 We bestowed upon David bounties from Us, and commanded thus, “O Tribes of the Mountains! Join him in establishing My glory on earth." And so were commanded the fierce riders of the Taer Tribe. And We made the iron soft for him. [David mastered steel forging technology. 21:79, 27:15-16]

34:11 (And We said to him), “Set up means for making coats of armor, and design a strong defense (with infantry and cavalry) linked in command. And (O People of David) you all shall use this power to serve humanity. Surely, I am Seer of whatever you do.”

David And Solomon, Endowed With Wisdom And Knowledge, Ruled In Justice:

21:78 And David and Solomon ruled in great justice. They gathered the straying sheep, the masses of their kingdom, when they were bent upon destroying their own crop of prosperity. We were Witness to their benevolent governance.

21:79 We gave Solomon great understanding of the affairs of the state, and each of them We endowed with wisdom and knowledge. It was Our Power that made the tribal leaders (loyal to David so that they could) strive to manifest Our glory as did the horse riders of the strong Tribe of At-Taeer. We are the One Who did all these things.[Jibaal = Mountains = The elite = Top leadership. At-Taeer = The birds = The ‘flying’ horsemen = A Tribe in Syria-Palestine with excellent cavalry. ‘We did’ = We made it possible]

21:80 We taught him the science of armor to protect you from each other's foolhardy violence. Are you then thankful?

27:15 We bestowed upon David and Solomon knowledge and they used to say, "All praise belongs to God Who has blessed us more than a great many of His believing servants."

38:17 Bear with patience whatever they may say, and remember Our servant David, the man of strength and resources. He always turned to Us (for guidance).

38:18 We subdued for him the strong Mountain Tribes that strove along with him night and day.

38:19 And the nomad riders of Taa'er Tribe were all obedient to him. [21:79, 27:16, 34:10]

38:20 We strengthened his Kingdom and gave him wisdom and good judgment. And We endowed him with the ability to make just decisions, and speak eloquently. [17:39, 43:63]

The Two Disputing Men:

38:21 Have you heard of the story of the two disputing men when they climbed the wall into his private chamber?

38:22 When they breached his privacy, he was startled. They said, "Do not be startled!" We are both disputing with each other as to who has done wrong to the other. Therefore, judge fairly between us. Do not deviate from equity and guide us to the even path."

Ninety-nine Versus One – Economic Reforms:

38:23 One of them said, "This my brother has ninety nine farms, whereas I have only one. And yet he says, 'Give it over to me', and he dominates me in eloquence." [Na'jah = Ewe = Female sheep or deer = Agricultural farm]

38:24 David said, "He has certainly wronged you in demanding your farm in addition to his farms. Many close associates and partners (in business) treat each other unfairly, except those who believe (in the Law

of Recompense) and care for others. And how few are they?" Afterwards, David thought that We had tried him. (The economic system in his kingdom needed reform.) He asked forgiveness of his Lord, bowed in humility and turned to Him (for guidance).

38:25 So We granted him forgiveness for this lapse. We have granted him honor from Our Presence, and a beautiful abode. [Although mentioned by many ancient and modern commentators of the Qur'an, the Biblical story of David taking Uriah's beautiful wife, Bathsheba, finds no place in the Qur'an.]

Establish The System Of Justice And Equity For People:

38:26 (We said to him), "O David! We have made you a ruler on the earth. Therefore, establish the System of justice and equity for people. Never let your judgment be swayed by personal whims causing you to deviate from the path of God. For those who wander from the path of God, there is a strict retribution for having forgotten the Day of Account."

CHAPTER - 20

PROPHET SOLOMON (SULAIMAN)

Prophet Solomon, son of Prophet David was born in Palestine and lived between 1011 BC and 926 BC.

38:30 And to David We granted Solomon, how excellent a servant! He would turn to Divine laws in every situation.

The Land Of Abundance:

7:137 We made the oppressed people inherit the east and the west of the land that We had blessed with abundant provision. The commands of your Lord were fulfilled for the Children of Israel to reward them for their steadfastness. Pharaoh and his people eventually met destruction for violating Our laws. And We leveled to the ground (the great works and fine buildings, temples, palaces, tombs, statues and stately) structures of all kinds that Pharaoh and his people had built with so much skill and pride. [The Children of Israel later inherited a sizeable and highly prosperous kingdom including Syria-Can'aan under David and Solomon.]

21:79 We gave Solomon great understanding of the affairs of the state, and each of them We endowed with wisdom and knowledge. It was Our Power that made the tribal leaders (loyal to David so that they could) strive to manifest Our glory as did the horse riders of the strong Tribe of At-Taeer. We are the One Who did all these things.[Jibaal = Mountains = The elite = Top leadership. At-Taeer = The birds = The 'flying' horsemen = A Tribe in Syria-Can'aan with excellent cavalry. 'We did' = We made it possible.]

Knowledge, Science & Technology – A Manifest Bounty:

21:80 We taught him the science of armor to protect you from each other's foolhardy violence. Are you then thankful?

21:81 We made the gusting winds subservient to Solomon as his ships sailed to the land We had blessed. And of everything We are Aware. [When people discover some of Divine laws, they call it Science, and Solomon made good use of it.]

21:82 We humbled the most rebellious tribes, and made them compliant to him. Some of them dived for him in the sea and carried out other duties, besides. But it was We Who kept watch over them. [We were for them, and are for you, the Guardians of the laws of governance and science. 34:13, 38:37]

27:15 We bestowed upon David and Solomon knowledge and they used to say, "All praise belongs to God Who has blessed us more than a great many of His believing servants."

27:16 Solomon was David's heir (as the Prophet and king) He said, "O People! We have been given a great cavalry of ready horses with best knowledge of training them, and we have been given every blessing. This is a manifest bounty." [21:79, 34:10. Solomon ruled as King from 965 to 926 BC. The common misconception that Solomon could speak to birds is denied here, as he clearly says that all his people understood Taair. Mantiq = Knowledge = Logic = Speech and concept. Taair = Omen = Destiny = Registration of Deeds = Fleet-footed horse = Cavalry = Bird. 5:110, 7:131, 27:47, 27:47, 17:13, 27:16, 2:260, 6:38, 24:4. At-Taairaan = Those marching to war]

27:17 Solomon's army included warrior tribes of the woods and the mountains, dwellers of townships, and great riders of the tribe of Taer. They were well disciplined, and dedicated to any appointed mission.

34:12 And to Solomon, We committed the wind at his disposal. (He mastered the science of sailing and his ships sailed much faster than the others.) They sailed one month going and one month coming back. And We gave him abundance in mining of copper and minerals and subdued for him the Wild Tribes who worked for him by his Lord's leave. (Solomon established the Divine System such that) Whoever turned aside from Our command, We made him taste a severe punishment. [21:82, 38:37]

The Valley Of An-Naml:

27:18 Once (when Solomon was on an expedition), they came upon the valley ruled by An-Naml. The Queen, (realizing the power of Solomon), ordered her armies, "Go back in your barracks, lest Solomon and his armies crush you without knowing that we are a peaceful tribe."

27:19 Solomon smiled joyously at her words and said, "My Lord! Enable me to be grateful for Your blessings upon me and my parents. And enable me to work for the betterment of humanity and thus achieve Your approval. Include me, by Your grace, among Your righteous servants."

The Hoopoe:

27:20 (Leaving the peaceful tribe of An-Naml alone, Solomon marched forward.) As he examined the cavalry, he said, “How is it that I do not see the commander Hoopoe (Al-Hoodhood)? Is he one of the absentees?”

27:21 Solomon said, "Unless the commander presented a good reason I would punish him or demote him to a low rank."

The Queen Of Sheba:

27:22 But before long Al-Hoodhood showed up. (He was coming back from a reconnaissance mission to the Kingdom of Queen Bilqees, Sheba.) He said, "I have come with the latest news, some important and reliable information from the land of Sheba that you are not aware of.” [Their armies were planning an expedition to North.]

27:23 “The country is ruled by a Queen who has been given everything and she has a tremendous throne.”

27:24 "I found her and her people worshiping the sun instead of God. Their ego makes them think that they are doing right. Satan (the priesthood of the Sun-Temple) hinders them from the right path. So they cannot find the right way."

27:27 (Solomon listened to the report and decided to carry out further investigation.) He said, "Soon we shall see whether you have told the truth or lied."

Solomon’s Letter To The Queen:

27:28 (He gave a letter to the commander of the cavalry to take to the court of Sheba), "Go with this letter of mine, deliver it to them, and then watch for their response."

27:29 The Queen said, "O Chiefs! A very noble letter has been delivered to me."

27:30 "It is from Solomon and it says, 'With the Name of God, the Instant and Sustaining Source of all Mercy and Kindness.'"

27:31 'Exalt not yourselves against me, but come to me as those who surrender.' [The Kingdom of Queen Bilqees Sheba of Yemen-Abyssinia had hostile plans towards the North.]

27:32 She said, "O Chiefs! Advise me in this matter. (You know that) I take no decisions without you."

27:33 They said, "We have the power, we are tough in warfare, and the command is yours. Think about (other aspects of the situation) and command as you will."

27:34 She said, "When kings invade a town, they ruin it and humiliate its dignitaries. Thus they behave.

Queen's Gift For Solomon:

27:35 So, I am going to send a gift to them and see the response that our envoys bring." [The intelligent Queen made a prudent decision disregarding the advice of her loyal chiefs. She was cognizant of King Solomon's might, and she was impressed by the benevolent message in the letter.]

27:36 The envoys reached Solomon with the gift and a letter from the Queen. Solomon said, "What! Do you want to please me with a gift of vanity? God has given me better than what He has given you (material wealth and guidance). Nay, it is you who exult in your gift."[The gift was studded with precious jewels and diamonds. Solomon, being a Prophet and a powerful emperor expected the Queen to denounce her hostile intentions in the region and to reflect about the One True God.]

27:37 Solomon said to the envoys, "Go back to them, (and tell them that) we certainly will come to them with forces they cannot withstand. We will drive the leaders out of power and they will be humiliated."
[Historically, the Kingdom of Sheba flourished from 1100 To 115 BC. At their zenith they were the richest nation in the world. Their economy was based on excellent agriculture and international trade. They had the most advanced irrigation systems of the times, with great water dams.

Their Kingdom included today's whole of Yemen, Somalia and Ethiopia, and boasting a strong army they frequently had expansive designs further south and up north. As the inevitable result of worshiping multiple false deities, including the sun, their society was not without inequities of caste and creed. Solomon, the King and the Prophet, planned to subdue the Sheba Empire to thwart their aggressive designs and to protect the region from oppression. And he succeeded magnificently. Queen Bilqees of Sheba and her people embraced Solomon's message and reverted to the worship and obedience of the One True God.]

Queen Comes To Solomon:

27:38 (When Solomon found out that the Queen was coming), He said, "O Chiefs! Which one of you can present the best plan to get her throne before they come to me surrendering?"

27:39 One of the strong commanders of the mountain division said, "My troops can accomplish this mission with lightening speed, before you rise up to think of and assign anyone else. I am competent and trustworthy for this job."

27:40 Another powerful commander, who had knowledge of the correspondence, said, "I can accomplish the mission even sooner, before your gaze returns to you (before you having to rethink)." (Solomon dispatched the forces and the mission was smoothly accomplished. The Queen's throne was brought to Solomon) he saw it set in his presence. He said, "This success is a blessing from my Lord, that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. Whoever is grateful is grateful for one's own good, and whoever is ungrateful, should know that my Lord is Absolutely Independent, Supremely Honorable."

27:41 Solomon then said, "Alter her throne for her so that we may see whether she gets the point and comes to guidance or whether she remains unguided." [Solomon's workmen had erased the images of the sun god, inscribed sensible inscriptions and made the throne look even more gorgeous.]

27:42 So, when she came, she was asked, “Is your throne like this?” She said, “It seems that this is it! We already knew that the truth is on your side and my chiefs and I have surrendered to it.”

27:43 What she used to worship other than God, had been stopping her. She had been of the disbelieving folk. [Solomon advised her that obeying God could bring not only the best provision in the world but insure eternal success. Queen Sheba embraced the message and stopped worshiping the sun, and other creations of God.]

Queen Escorted To Solomon’s Palace:

27:44 She was escorted to the palace. It was said, “Enter the hall.” When she saw the smooth polished glass floor, she thought that it was a pool of water and she was spellbound. Solomon said, “This is a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass.” She said, "I have been doing wrong to myself, and now I submit with Solomon to God, the Lord of the Worlds." [She realized that following the Divine laws ensures the best bounties in this life as well. There are some historical accounts that Solomon and Bilqees got married. But the Rabbinical Talmudic traditions propose that they committed adultery then and there, out of which Nimrod Nebuchadnezzar, the tyrant emperor of Babylon was born! That is of course inconceivable of God’s Prophet. Kashafat ‘an saaqaiha idiomatically means that she was spellbound, and not that she bared her calves; a common error of many translators. For example, tying one’s hand to the neck means miserliness.]

Fine Arts:

34:13 They worked for him as he desired, making forts, statues, sculptures, paintings and images, pools, instruments of music, and boilers well-dug into the ground. We said, “Labor O Children of David, in gratitude for what you have been given. Few of My servants are truly grateful in practice.”

Please note a Prophet of God decorating his kingdom with statues, sculptures, paintings and images. Muslim orthodoxy, unfortunately, prohibits almost all fine arts. [17:101]

Solomon's Demise And Dissent Of Ten Tribes:

38:34 (That was Solomon and) We tried him, and set upon his throne a mere body, and thereupon he turned to Us. [His son, the crown prince Rehoboam was just a hopeless presence. (34:14). Until that point in history, the Kingdom of Israel was inherited and ruled the generations of Prophet Jacob]

34:14 When We decreed death for him (Solomon), nothing showed his death to the Wild Tribes until a creature of the earth ate away the strength he had mustered. (The incompetent successor Rehoboam destroyed the Kingdom's strength.) When the power base fell, the Wild Tribes rebelled regretting that they should have done it sooner only if they knew that the new king was unjust, weak and incompetent .[The 'creature of the earth' was the highly incompetent Rehoboam, son of, and successor to, Solomon. Historically, ten of the Israelite Tribes also broke away from the Kingdom at that point.]

CHAPTER - 21

PROPHET ELIJAH (ELIAS)

He was one of the Israelite Prophets who lived in the 9th and 8th centuries BC. Like other Tribal Prophets, his mission was directed to the Children of Israel who were committed to idol worship at that time.

37:123 Elijah (Elias) was one of Our Messengers.

37:124 When he said to his people, "Will you not seek to live upright?

37:125 You call upon Ba'l, and disregard the Best of creators,

37:126 God! Your Lord, and Lord of your forefathers." [Ba'l is the term used in the Qur'an for husband. During the times of Prophet Elijah the Tishbite, the Israelites had come to worship a god of masculinity, which was hand crafted to resemble Lingum, the male organ of Hindu Mythology. King Ahab and his wife Jezebel had huge temples built for the worship of and sacrifices to Ba'l, and a dominant faction among the Israelites had disregarded the strict Monotheism of the Torah in favor of Ba'l.]

37:127 But they denied him. And they will certainly be arraigned to give account.

37:128 But the sincere servants of God (shall be saved).

37:129 And we left for him remembrance among the later generations.

37:130 Peace and salutation to Elijah!

37:131 Surely, this is how we reward the benefactors of humanity.

CHAPTER - 22

PROPHET ELISHA (AL-YASA')

Prophet Elisha is mentioned in the Bible, Book of Kings II. The book depicts him as the reincarnation of Prophet Elijah. Elisha revives the dead, cures leprosy and blindness. More miraculous than Jesus, even his bones revive the dead. Elisha was the successor of Prophet Elijah who prophesied from 892 to 832 BC before being taken up by a whirlwind.

6:84 We gave him Isaac the son, and Jacob the grandson, and We guided them. Before Abraham, We guided Noah and from his descendants, We guided David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. We thus reward the benefactors of humanity.

6:85 And Zacharias, John the Baptist, Jesus and Elijah (Elias); all in the ranks of the righteous who fulfilled the needs of mankind.

6:86 And Ishmael, Elisha (Al-Yasa'), Jonah (Yunus), and Lot (Lut). To all of them We gave distinction over people of their times.

CHAPTER - 23

PROPHET JONAH (YUNUS)

Prophet Jonah was sent to Nineveh, the capital of Ancient Assyria around 700 BC. Nineveh was located by the East Bank of the Tigris River, and had a population of over 100,000.

Granting a period of respite to nations, in which they can mend their ways, is one of the eternal Divine laws.

Jonah's people used to live in humiliation in Nineveh. When they accepted the Divine message, they prospered for about two centuries between 800-612 BC. Then the Midyans conquered them. After the demise of Jonah, his people had been fast ignoring God's message revealed to Jonah, and leaning towards the resurging priest class. The invaders set on fire the wonderful town of Nineveh. The spacious 60 mile wide and beautiful town was reduced to ashes. The king of Assyria got himself burnt alive in the palace, and that was the end of the Assyrian dynasty.

Jonah Migrated Before Commanded By God.

21:87 And remember Zan-Noon (Jonah of Ninevah), when he departed in anger thinking that We had no power over him. But he cried out in darkness, "There is no god but You. Be You Glorified! Truly, I have been a wrongdoer." ['We had no power over him' = Jonah thought that God would not take him to task. Jonah lost all hope of his people reforming, and migrated before the Divine decree came. 10:98, 37:139-148, 68:48. 'Zulumaat' = Darkness, plural = Desperate situation = Hopelessness = Remorse. It has nothing to do with the legend of staying in the belly of a fish. The fish had only grabbed him in her teeth momentarily.]

37:139 Jonah was among the Messengers.

37:140 When he fled like a runaway slave onto a laden ship.

37:141 He had cast an arrow and missed the mark. [This indicates untimely action. Here, most translations are influenced by Biblical and other accounts. It is stated that the boat was overloaded and in order to

save it, one man had to be cast into the sea. When the lots were thrown, it was Jonah who lost. But Prophets do not participate in lots, a form of gambling.]

The Fish Never Swallowed Jonah:

37:142 Then the fish grabbed him while he was blaming himself. [Again, usually a blue whale is mentioned in the legend. But the whale is a mammal and not a fish, and the Qur'an which is never inaccurate, speaks of 'Al-Hut' = The Fish. 'Fa-altaqamahu' = Grabbed him in its teeth, not 'swallowed'. Another interesting fact is that the blue whale only feeds on the tiniest plant particles, the planktons. Her throat has been designed so narrow that it cannot swallow even a chicken. The myth of Jonah staying 40 days in the belly of a whale is thus demolished.]

37:143 And had he not been a valiant swimmer,

37:144 (The fish would have eaten him up and) He would have remained in her belly disintegrated there and further until the Day of Rising.

37:145 (He freed himself and swam to safety). Then We cast him on the shore, while he was exhausted. [68:49]

37:146 We made him rest under a well-grown fruity tree.

37:147 And We sent him back to his people, a hundred thousand, even more.

37:148 And this time they believed in him and so We let them enjoy this life (for a time).

CHAPTER - 24

PROPHET ZACHARIAH (ZAKARIYA)

He lived in Jerusalem during the first century BC.

Prophet Zacharias was the elder contemporary of Mary. Both descended from Prophet Aaron. The families had been the custodians of the holy shrines in Can'aan (Palestine). Zacharias, a distant uncle was Mary's guardian in the sanctuary. Jesus is referred to as son of Mary because his mother was more prominent and also because his father Joseph the carpenter, died at an early age. The Bible also refers to Jesus as son of man and as son of David, and Elizabeth wife of Zakariya is called the daughter of Aaron.

Mary's family had dedicated her to the service of the temple and she was under the guardianship of Prophet Zakariya. He was a distant uncle of Mary. Just as the Bible calls Elizabeth wife of Zakariya as a daughter of Aaron (Luke 1:5), the Qur'an calls Mary as sister of Aaron. This indicates Elizabeth and Mary's affiliation with the temple like Aaron's as a priest.
Prophet Zechariah of the Old Testament belonged to previous generations, and he was, thus, a different person from Prophet Zakariya of the Qur'an. Zakariya is called Zacharias in the New Testament. He was the father of John the Baptist (Yahya).

3:37 Her Lord accepted her graciously. (Mary was dedicated to the temple) and He made her grow in purity and elegance, a gracious upbringing, under the guardianship of Zakariya. Whenever he entered the chamber of Mary, he found that she had food. (Knowingly) he asked, "O Mary! Where does this food come from?" She said, "It is from God." God provides according to His laws, beyond reckoning. ['It is from God'… Visitors to the sanctuary serve the saints. Many of them bring gifts to get their vows fulfilled.]

3:38 This was when Zakariya prayed to his Lord, "My Lord! Bestow upon me from Your Presence the gift of goodly offspring. You are the Hearer of prayer."

3:39 While he was still praying in the chamber, angels announced to him, “God gives you the good news of a son, Yahya who would reiterate the Word of God, be a disciplined leader and a Prophet among those who set things right.”

3:40 Zakariya prayed to God, but then wondered, “My Lord! How could I have a son when old age has overtaken me already and my wife is barren?” He said, “So it will be, God does everything according to His laws.” [The infertility in his wife was cured. 21:90]

3:41 Thankful, Zakariya asked, “My Lord! Give a message to me.” He said, “The message to you is that you shall not speak to people for three days (and nights), except by signs. Remember your Lord much and keep striving in His cause night and day.”
[19:10. Abstaining from speech would save the elderly couple from the embarrassing curiosity of people.]

CHAPTER - 25

JOHN THE BAPTIST (PROPHET YAHYA)

He was the son of Prophet Zakariya (first century BC).

3:39 While he was still praying in the chamber, angels announced to him, “God gives you the good news of a son, Yahya who would reiterate the Word of God, be a disciplined leader and a Prophet among those who set things right.”

19:7 He was told, “O Zakariya! We give you the good news of a boy whose name shall be Yahya . We have never given this name to anyone before.” [19:65]

19:8 Zakariya exclaimed, "My Lord! How can I have a son when my wife is barren and I am already infirm with old age?"

19:9 He said: Thus it is. Your Lord says, “It is easy for Me. I created you before, and you were nothing." [The infertility in his wife was treated. 21:90]

19:10 Zakariya said, “My Lord! Give me a special message.” He said, “The message is that you shall not speak to people for three (days and) nights consecutively.” [3:40-41. Vow of silence - 19:26. He was not struck dumb (as claimed in Luke: 1:20-22)]

19:11 Then Zakariya came out from the shrine and told his deputies by signs, “Keep striving in your mission morning and evening that His glory be manifest to beholders.”

19:12 [Yahya was born according to the good news.] We told him “O Yahya! Hold fast to the scripture.” And We had granted him wisdom and good judgment when he was yet a little boy.

19:13 We gave him compassion from Our Presence and a spotless character. He lived a life upright and he was of those who empower themselves against evil.

19:14 He was dutiful toward his parents, and was polite, not rebellious or arrogant.

19:15 Salutes to him the day he was born, the day he dies and the day he shall be raised alive!

CHAPTER - 26

PROPHET JESUS ('ISA)

Jesus Christ was the last Prophet/Messenger of God in the Israelite chain of Prophets through Prophet Abraham's second son, Isaac. Then the Divine Revelation shifted to the last Prophet/Messenger for all mankind, Prophet Muhammad, in the progeny of the elder son of Abraham, Prophet Ishmael.

2:253 (All Messengers were one in purpose. They were assigned different strategies suitable to their times, locations and people.) We caused some of those Messengers to excel others. God spoke to some of them. Others He raised in degrees of high honor. Jesus son of Mary was one of those Messengers whom We gave clear signs of truth and helped him with Noble revelation. ….
[All Messengers were one in purpose 2:136, 2:285. God did not create human beings like programmed robots. He endowed men and women with free will, and never ordained compulsion in religion (2:256). God makes His laws in the World of command as He wills, and implements them in the World of Creation 7:54. And He never changes His laws. 6:15, 6:34, 7:54, 10:64, 17:77, 30:30, 33:62, 35:43, 48:23. Roohul Qudus = The Noble revelation = Gabriel 2:87, 5:110, 16:102]

The honored Messengers of God, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were descendants of the Patriarch, Abraham. Prophet Jacob, the grandson of Abraham was also called Israel. Jews are known as Israelites in reference to Jacob. 'Imran (Amram) is the name of the father of Moses and Aaron, and also of a branch among Israelites. Mary, the mother of Jesus, belonged to the progeny of 'Imran. She was a descendant of Prophet Aaron. The Qur'an confirms only the Divine origination of the Bible, but it strongly points to the extensive human touch in the Old & New Testaments. [2:75, 2:78-79, 2:101, 3:70-71, 3:78, 3:186-187, 5:13, 5:41, 6:91, 9:31.]

3:44 (O Messenger Muhammad) We are revealing to you these events of the unseen history (so that you may dispel conjecture). You were not present with them when they threw their pens (casting lots) which of

them should take charge of Mary (after Zakariya). And you were not present with them when they quarreled about it.

3:45 Angels said, "O Mary! God gives you the good news through a word from Him. His name would be Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor in this world and among the ones close (to Me) in the Hereafter.

3:46 He will speak to people while very young and in ripe old age with his faculties well intact."

3:47 Mary exclaimed! "O My Lord, How shall I have a son when no man has (intimately) touched me?" He said, "Just as God creates everyone according to His laws (3:40). When God decrees a matter, it starts happening." [It starts happening as God decrees, but in the repressive society Mary had to keep her wedding confidential in the family.]

3:48 "And God will teach him the scripture and the wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel."

I Am Here To Establish Justice And Equity:

3:49 And He will be a Messenger to the Children of Israel. He will say to them, "I come to you with revelation from your Lord. If you follow me, I will raise you from dust to the heights of glory by the command of God (7:176). The blind among you will begin to see the truth. Those of you who are spotted with sin, I will heal them, and I shall grant real life to those who are just dragging on without purpose; all by God's leave, according to His laws. I am here to establish justice and equity. I shall see to it how much you hoard in your houses and how much you spend on the community. My teachings are sufficient signs for you to believe."

3:50 "I confirm the truth in the Torah before me, and make permissible to you some of what was forbidden. I have come with your Lord's revelation. Be mindful of His commands and heed me."

3:51 "God is my Lord and your Lord, so obey Him. That is the straight path."

3:52 (This is what the angels had told Mary. Then Jesus was commissioned as a Prophet.) As he sensed their rejection, he called out,

"Who are my supporters towards God?" The disciples said, "We are God's supporters, we believe in God, so bear witness that we are submitters (Muslims)."

3:53 They said, "Our Lord! We believe in what You have revealed and we follow the Messenger. So make us live as the living witnesses to the truth."

God Is The Most Virtuous Planner:

3:54 They (the opponents) made some plans, but so did God. God is the most Virtuous of planners. [They schemed to arrest and crucify Jesus but God assured him.]

3:55 God said, "O Jesus! I will cause you to die of natural causes, I will exalt you in My Sight and will clear you of the slander of the disbelievers. And I will cause those who truly follow you to dominate those who reject, until the Day of Resurrection. Eventually, all of you will return to Me. Then I will judge among you about that wherein you used to differ." [Wafaat = Dying of natural causes. Rafa' = Exalt = Raising in honor. Ilayya = To Me = Allegorically, in My Sight. God is Omnipresent not confined to the heavens.]

3:56 Those who disregard faith (in God's laws of nature), I shall cause them to suffer in this world and in the Hereafter. Nor will they have any helpers.

"Kun Fayakoon" – Be And It Is:

3:59 With God, the example of Jesus is that of Adam (other humans) who were initially created from dust and then evolved through different stages of life (22:5, 30:20). He created him (the human) beginning from inorganic matter, then He said to him, "Be! And he is." [The process of procreation goes on - "IS". Kun fayakoon = The moment God decrees a thing, it starts happening.]

3:62 This is the true account (of Jesus). There is no god but God. And God is Almighty, the Wise.

3:63 But if they turn away (from the truth), then God is Aware of the corrupters.

3:64 Say, “O People of the Book! Let us come to common terms as between us and you that we shall serve none but God. That neither shall we ascribe divinity to anyone beside Him, nor shall we take others for our lords beside God.” And if they turn away, then say, “Bear witness that it is we who have surrendered ourselves to Him.”

Crucifixion Or Crucifiction?

4:156 And for their disbelief to the extent that they (Jews) brought a terrible charge against Mary.

4:157 And for claiming, “We killed the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, God’s Messenger.” They never killed him and never crucified him. But it appeared so to them and the matter remained dubious to them. Those who hold conflicting views on this issue are but confused. They have no real knowledge and they are following mere conjecture. Most certainly, they never killed him.

4:158 Nay, God exalted him in His Sight. (They had plotted thinking that crucifixion was a death of curse. But God raised him in honor. See 3:55) God is Almighty, Wise.

4:159 Everyone among the People of the Book must believe before dying, in the truth just stated. Jesus will be a witness against them on the Day of Resurrection. [5:116-117. Neither was he killed or crucified nor raised to the heavens. God is Omnipresent.]
Trinity?

4:171 O People of the Scripture! Do not exaggerate in your religion. Say nothing about God except the truth. The Messiah Jesus son of Mary was a Messenger of God, the fulfillment of His Word to Mary, created according to the laws of creation and given free will from the Divine Energy (like all human beings 15:29, 32:7-9, 38:72). Believe in God and His Messengers, and say not: “Three". Cease! It is for your own good. God is but One God. Far removed it is from His Supreme Majesty that He should have a son. Everything in the Highs and everything in the Lows belongs to Him. God is enough as a Trustee (of the Universe).

4:172 Never was the Messiah too proud to serve God, nor the angels nearest to Him shy from obeying Him. Whoever shuns His service and is proud, He will assemble all to Him.

5:72 Rejecters of the truth certainly are those who proclaim that God is Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah himself taught them, "O Children of Israel! You shall worship God, my Lord and your Lord." Whoever associates deities with God, for such God has forbidden Paradise and their abode is the fire. For those who choose to do wrong, there will be no helpers.

5:73 And certainly they disbelieve who say that God is one of three (in a Trinity) when there is no god whatsoever but the One God. Unless they desist from saying what they say, grievous suffering is bound to befall such of them who oppose the truth.

5:74 Will they not rather turn to God and seek His forgiveness? For God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Mary, A Woman of Truth:

5:75 The Messiah, son of Mary, was no other than a Messenger, like other Messengers before him who passed on. And his mother was a woman of truth. Both of them were human beings who had to eat food (like all other mortals). See how clearly We explain Our verses for them, and note how they still deviate!

5:76 Say, “Would you worship in place of God what possesses no power of harm or benefit to you?” God is the One Who is the Hearer, the Knower.

5:77 Say, “O People of the Book! Do not overstep the bounds of truth in your religious beliefs. And do not follow the errant views of people who have gone astray long before, and led a great many others astray, and those who are still straying from the even way.

5:109 On the Day when God will assemble all Messengers and ask them, “What was the long term response to your teachings?” They will say, “We have no knowledge. You are the Knower of the Unseen.”

Blessed With Knowledge And Wisdom:

5:110 Then God will say, “O Jesus, son of Mary! Recall My blessings upon you and your mother. I strengthened you with Sacred Revelation, enabled you to speak eloquently to the people in childhood, and also at the advanced age. I gave you revelation and wisdom including the Torah and the Gospel. Recall that you told them that you would raise them from dust up into the heights of glory, by My leave. You made people see the truth otherwise given to blind following, by My leave. You healed the wounds of inequity on people, by My leave, and you gave a new meaning to life to those who were otherwise no better than dead, by My leave. Recall, how I prevented the Children of Israel from harming you when you came to them with all evidence of the truth. And those who were bent upon denying the truth said, “This is nothing but clear deception.” [3:45-48, 3:111, 4:157, 6:123. 7:176]

5:111 Recall, I told the disciples in the Gospel, “Believe in Me and in My Messenger. They said, "We believe, and be Witness that we are submitters."

5:112 When the disciples said, “O Jesus, son of Mary! Is your Lord Able to send down for us a Table Spread with Divine sustenance? Jesus said, “Be mindful of God if you are believers.” [Establish the Divine Order on earth and that will ensure Divine provision in abundance and equity. 7:96]

5:113 They said, "This is exactly what we want. So that we live with a contented heart and know that your system is truly workable and that we may be witnesses for the future generations.”

Divine System Ensures Abundant Provision For All:

5:114 Jesus son of Mary said, “O God, our Lord! Give us the strength to establish the Divine System that ensures abundance of provision for all of us. Let there be a happy feast for the founders and the followers among us. And let this be a sign from You (that the Divine System guarantees prosperity for all). Provide sustenance for us, for You are the Best of providers.” [3:7]

5:115 God said, “I will make abundance for you as long as you remain loyal to the System. But, for those who disbelieve afterward, I will punish them as I have never punished anyone else.”

On The Resurrection Day:

5:116 On the Resurrection Day, God will say: O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you say to mankind, “Worship me and my mother as gods besides God?" He will respond, "Be You Glorified! I could never say that was not my right. If I said such a thing, You would certainly know it. You know what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Your mind. You are the Knower of what is beyond human perception.”

5:117 "Never did I say to them except what You commanded me to say, 'Be subservient to God my Lord and your Lord.' I was a witness to them as long as I lived among them. After You caused me to die, You were the Watcher over them and You are Witness over all things and events."

5:119 God will say, "This is a Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness. For them are Gardens with rivers flowing beneath, wherein they will be immortal. God is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. This is the Greatest Triumph.”
The Creator Does Not Procreate – Who Fathered Jesus?

6:101 Wonderful Originator of the heavens and earth; how can He have a son when He never chose for Himself a mate? He creates all things (and does not procreate 112:3.) and He is the Profound Knower of all things and events.

So, how could Mary have a son without a mate? God never changes His laws operative in the universe. Amazingly, three of the four gospels in their genealogies mention Joseph Carpenter as the father of Jesus.

Surah 19 – Maryam (Mary)

Surah Maryam expounds important facts about Jesus. One of the important injunctions that clearly come through in this Surah is that God makes laws as He wills in the World of Command and implements them in the World of Creation i.e. the Universe. Then, He never changes them. The grand empire of human learning, development, invention, science and technology would have failed to come off ground if God’s physical

laws in the Universe were to keep changing. Pregnancy and childbirth require the unison of the male and the female chromosomes. God never changes His laws, therefore, the idea of a virgin birth, although popular among the Christians and the Muslims, is non-Qur'anic and absolutely erroneous. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is probably more often mentioned in the Qur'an than in the Bible, as a lady of outstanding determination and character. Jesus is referred to as son of Mary because his mother was more prominent and also because his father Joseph the carpenter, died at an early age. The Bible also refers to Jesus as son of man and as son of David, and Elizabeth wife of Zacharias is called the daughter of Aaron. Also, in the history of mankind Mary was the first revolutionary and that too, a feminine voice against the institution of monasticism that was never Divinely ordained. [57:27]

Before moving on, let us note a few salient points for the sake of clear understanding:

- Mary was a descendant of Prophet Aaron. Even generations after a prominent man, it was customary to call the descendants this way. In Luke 1:5 Elizabeth, the wife of Prophet Zacharias, is referred to as "One of the daughters of Aaron". That is why Mary is referred to as sister of Aaron in 19:28.
- In verse 19:23 it appears that Mary is talking to her husband. Violation of the sanctuary rules, a land far from home, lack of shelter and labor pains all add to her grief. Now a few important concepts given in the Qur'an that strongly negate the fallacy of "Virgin Birth".
- God does all things according to His laws. [3:40,19:9]
- And you will never see God's laws changing or deviating. [6:34, 6:116, 10:64, 17:77, 18:27, 33:38, 33:62, 35:43, 40:85, 48:23]
- The example of Jesus, as far as God is concerned, is the same as that of Adam. He created him from dust; then said to him, "Be", and he was. [3:59]
- By Adam is meant all mankind. [7:11]
- All men are created from dust, then from a zygote, male and female. [22:5]
- The Qur'an emphatically and repeatedly states that all human beings are procreated from both male and female, without exceptions.
- Even God would not have an offspring since He never had a mate. [6:101. So, how could Mary have a child without a mate?

Three of the four gospels name Joseph Carpenter as Jesus' father in their genealogies.]

- Verse 19:22 narrates Mary moving far-off from her village. Since Mary had broken the rules of the shrine, she and her family kept the marriage with Joseph Carpenter confidential. When she became pregnant, the husband and wife decided to move far away to avoid the mockery of people.

19:34 Such was Jesus, the son of Mary and this is the truth of this matter about whose nature they so deeply disagree.

19:35 It does not befit God that He would beget a son. He is Glorious, High above (what they say). When He decrees a thing, it starts happening.

19:36 And (Jesus always said), "Surely, God is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him alone. This is the straight path."

19:37 And yet, the sects (that follow the Bible) differ among themselves. There is humiliation in store for all those who deny the truth when that awesome Day appears.

CHAPTER - 27a

PROPHET MUHAMMAD

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (570-632) was the final Prophet of God. He had been commissioned in 610 CE when he was forty years old. Human civilization in the 7th Century CE had become advanced enough to receive the Divine Message for all peoples and all times.

Some Sources:

- The Qur'an
- "The Qur'an As it Explains Itself" by Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.
- Rahmatallil'Aalameen by Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman Salman Mansurpuri
- Uswa-e-Rasool-e-Akram by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hai
- Tareekh-e-Ummat by Allama Aslam Jairajpuri
- Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd by Ibn Sa'd al-Baghdadi
- Tazkarah by Allama Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi
- Seerat-un-Nabi by Allama Shibli Na'mani
- Tareekh Kabeer by Imam Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari
- Me'raj-e-Insaniat by Allama G.A. Parwez
- Khutbat-e-Ahmadia by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
- The Ideal Prophet by Aisha Ahmed
- Tafsir-e-Qur'an by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
- Seerah-tun-Nabi by Ibn Ishaq
- Who Wrote The Qur'an by Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.
- Seerah-tun-Nabi by Ibn Hisham
- Riaz-us-Saliheen by Hafiz Salahuddin Yousuf
- Ar-Raheeq-il-Makhtum by Saifur Rahman al-mubarakpuri

As we noted briefly in the last chapter, the advent of Prophet Muhammad from the Ishmaelite descendants of Abraham was foretold in the Bible (Genesis 21:13-18. Gospel of John 14:16, 15:26, 16:7. See also QXP 2:125). Historically, the Gospel of Saint Barnabas that was accepted and widely read in the churches had 'Muhammad' in the exact Arabic form. But Pope Gelasius, finding the Arabic name distasteful, banned that Gospel in 496 CE. In the 16th century, the Italian translation of Barnabas was discovered in Vienna, Austria.

CHAPTER - 27b

A MAN OF THE NOBLEST CHARACTER:

Prophet Muhammad was born in Makkah on 20th April 570 CE. Makkah is a town in today's western Saudi Arabia. He was born in Bani Hashim, a branch of the most prominent Quraish tribe, a people that were honored in the entire Arabia. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, was the chief of his tribe and the chief of Makkah as well. Abdul Muttalib was in charge of the Ka'bah which is the symbolic First House of Monotheism and Unity of Mankind. It was built by Prophet Ibrahim and his son Ismail, about 2000 BC.

With profound respects, I take the honor of narrating some glorious events from the noble life of the most exalted man ever to grace this earth. These historical records are being randomly presented.

WHY THIS CHAPTER 27b? I felt it necessary to write this chapter to apprise Muslims and other readers that Muhammad (S) was a most clement man according to reliable evidence. Invariably, he pardoned his staunchest enemies without a second thought. Even then, whenever the exalted Prophet is insulted, maligned or derided anywhere in the world, Muslims raise a furor in their countries, destroying human lives and their own property. Why don't they follow the example of the Prophet (S) and refrain from reacting? Their negative reaction fulfills at least one purpose of the hate mongers. For example, had the late Imam Khomeini not placed a bounty on the head of Salman Rushdie, no one in the world would have known about his third rate book, third rate by any literary standards. But the man became a millionaire overnight with the sales of his book, "Satanic Verses".

We have once again recently seen violent reaction from Muslims in many countries on insults generated by some ignorant and shortsighted individuals in Holland and Denmark (in the early 21st century). I do not blame them since such detractors are unaware of the adorable truth.
This chapter shows the matchless character of Prophet Muhammad and how graciously he pardoned his staunchest enemies time and again.

Muslims Must Understand That Prophet Muhammad (S) Is Beyond Reproach.

WHY?

Title From The Almighty: The Lord of the Universe entitles the exalted Prophet Muhammad with 'Rahmatallil'Aalameen' (Grace For All Nations And Peoples).
21:107 And thus, (O Prophet) We have sent you as a mercy for the worlds. [Mankind will become one single community through the Book revealed to you. 'Rahmatallil'Aalameen' = Mercy for the worlds = Grace for all humanity = A benevolent advent for all nations and peoples.]

The exalted Prophet is God's grace to all humanity for the following reasons as well:
1 - The permanent code of conduct was revealed to him for all mankind irrespective of race, color, cast and national origin.
2 – The Revelation to him appeals exclusively to reason and does not require blind faith in any dogmas.

3 - It is the only perfectly preserved scripture in the world.

The Almighty Testifies To The Sublime Character Of Prophet Muhammad:

68:3 And yours will be an everlasting reward.

68:4 For, most certainly, you have sublime morals.

The Qur'an Cites A Matchless Testimony:

10:16 Say, "…. I have dwelt among you a whole lifetime before this. (You have always called me Al-Ameen, the trustworthy and As-Sadiq, the truthful). …. Will you not, then, use your sense?" [Not a single person in Arabia refuted this claim and not a single person could find fault in his character.]

The exalted Prophet Muhammad was the greatest man ever to set foot on the earth. It is quite understandable that people who are unaware of his sublime character easily fall for the false reports narrated on the conjecture based history and tradition written by non-Muslims under

fictitious names centuries after him. It should be sufficient to say that these false reports were compiled 250-350 years after the Prophet passed on in 632 CE. Without exception, these reports were based on hearsay, "He said this and heard it from that, who heard it from Tom, who heard it from Dick, who heard it from Harry" and so on. None of the compilers of these irrationalities had a single piece of paper before them. Fortunately, we have the fully preserved Qur'an that serves as the 'Furqan' (The Criterion between right and wrong). It helps us accept the true reports and dismiss the false ones.

The Parents, The Grand Old Man And The Little Orphan:

The chief, Abdul Muttalib had 10 sons. Abdullah was the youngest. The family arranged his marriage to a beautiful, gentle, and intelligent young lady. Her name was Amena bint Wahab. Abdullah means the servant of Allah and Amena means someone who is at peace and provides peace. Both were about 20 years old at the time of their marriage.

Soon after, Abdullah went on a business trip to Syria. While returning home, he became ill and died in Madinah at the home of his maternal grandparents. Amena was devastated, but she had excellent support from her illustrious husband's family.

Muhammad was born after his father's untimely death. His mother Amena, the governess Umm Aimon, and other family members took very good care of him. But another misfortune struck when he was only 6 years old. His loving mother died of a brief febrile illness, possibly sun-stroke. She was traveling home to Makkah returning with Abdul Muttalib after visiting her deceased husband's grave in Madinah. Prophet Muhammad was at a great disadvantage from the beginning. Fortunately, his grandfather Abdul Muttalib was a very kind and caring personality.

NO EDUCATION:

Makkah had no schools in those days. The young boy had no siblings and few like-minded youngsters. We may wonder how such a smart child spent his time! The summers were too hot with outdoors temperatures in the desert rising as high as 116, and it got freezing cold in winters. Mud and wood houses and big shady trees afforded the only

respite from harsh weather. There was no library, no mode of learning or teaching. Only 23 people in Makkah knew how to read or write.

NO VEHICLES, NO LAMPS:

Older nations had wheel-carts three thousand years before the Prophet's time. The people of Egypt and the Indus Valley (now in Pakistan) used wheelbarrows, bullock carts, chariots, and horse carriages. In Arabia, however, no one had a vehicle. People used donkeys, ponies, horses, mules, and camels for traveling. Of course, there were no media. Poetry, stories, current events and folklore were the sole means of exchanging thought. The Arabs of the times used no lamps at night.

THE LITTLE BRIGHT MUHAMMAD IN THE DARK ENVIRONMENT:

It was in this environment that the Prophet was learning about life. The smart, peaceful child created his own resources and never wasted his time. Some may wonder why the little boy Muhammad is called Prophet. All Prophets were born as such although commissioned to the Divine Office later. They were chosen individuals, hence, none can become a Prophet by striving to do so. Muhammad was commissioned to prophethood and received the first Message from Allah in his 40th year.

The young, bright, orphan boy was raised in Makkah and in the surrounding desert. Very early in his life, he learned to ride bareback ponies, mules, horses and camels. There were no swimming pools in those days, but rainwater did collect in natural ponds, so the little boy learned how to swim. He also kept busy by taking the sheep and goats of his family and neighbors out for grazing. He also liked to play with his bow and arrow in the vast desert. Running after the arrows, herding animals, riding, and swimming all kept him very fit. Herding livestock made him feel very responsible. No one at that time had the faintest idea that this brilliant, lovely child would one day become the greatest leader of mankind.

As he grew, the clear days and nights of the desert offered a vast view of Nature. Allah teaches us through the Qur'an, but we also learn from His other Book: the Universe around us. Muhammad closely observed the wonders of Nature around him. He understood that there is great

discipline in the Universe. The sun rose in the East and set in the West everyday. The moon and the stars appeared at night. Seasons changed in regular sequence. Seeds grew into plants. He knew in his heart that there could be only One Creator and Sustainer to keep such remarkable order and discipline in the Universe. He was surrounded by adults and children who worshiped the sun, the moon, the stars and hand-made statues or idols. There were hundreds of idols in the Ka'bah. They thought that angels were the daughters of God. Jews and Christians in Arabia assigned children to God, such as Osiris and Jesus, respectively. Even as a child, Muhammad never worshiped any of the false gods.

THE FANCY DRESS SHOW:

One day, when he was a teenager, youngsters promised to take him to a nice place. In fact, it was a dance show on stage featuring immodest dress. Muhammad did not waste any time. He turned back home alone and never went to any shows again.

SERVICE OF HUMANITY:

While others wasted their time in vain talk and senseless play, Muhammad the exalted, helped people. He helped the elderly, the sick, and the widows with their needs. He even milked their cows and goats and fed any hungry animals. He always did his own chores and repaired his own shoes. Everyone in town loved him. They called him Ameen (Trustworthy) and Sadiq (Truthful).

GRANDFATHER AND UNCLE:

The grand old man of Makkah, Abdul Muttalib died at the age of 82. Muhammad (S) was about 8 years old at that time. A son of Abdul Muttalib, Abu Talib raised Muhammad (S) from then on.

When the exalted Prophet was born, he was named Muhammad by his celebrated grandfather. This was a very special name since no one ever had this name before. People asked Abdul Muttalib, "Why a brand new name?" He responded, "I want this child to be praiseworthy." Muhammad means the praised one.

When Muhammad (S) was 12 years old his uncle Abu Talib, started taking him with trade caravans to Syria. Makkah was an important

business center in those days. Camel and horse caravans frequented between Yemen, Taif, Makkah, Madinah, and Syria.

EARLY QUALITIES:

Even as a young child, the exalted Prophet had exceptional qualities. He respected elders and was very kind to little children. He realized that time made up life, so he never wasted it. Rather, he learned new skills everyday. Later on he would remark, "One whose two successive days go in an identical fashion has suffered a big loss." Unlike other youngsters, he did not indulge in vain sport or talk. He would rather serve the community day and night. There were no banks or safe deposits in those days. People of Makkah deposited their valuables with the teenager Muhammad because he was trustworthy. They knew him as a young man of life upright. He shunned intoxicants, gambling, yelling, violence, and bad company.

Not A 'Berm' (A Bore or 'Nerd')

Still, no one thought of him as a boring 'nerd' since:

- He had a decent sense of humor and enjoyed good poetry.
- He was an extremely good listener who spoke softly, slowly, and clearly.
- He was a man of word, and people could depend on him.
- He used to draw great lessons from history and shared them with others.
- He took deep and sincere interest in human, animal and plant life.
- He was extremely environment conscious and did exemplary community service.
- No one ever saw him losing his temper. Overall, he had a matchless nobility of character.

The Prophet would later tell the people of Makkah, "I have spent a lifetime in your midst. Don't you reflect?" It is amazing to note that even his enemies could find no fault in him throughout his life.

THE PEACE DEAL:

When he was about 25 years old, Muhammad, the exalted, helped formulate a very important document. He sat down with the influential leaders of the town. Keeping in mind the insecurity of that society, they reached the following conclusions:

1. Travel must be made safe.
2. Tribal raids must be halted.
3. The poor must be helped.
4. The weak must be protected.

All tribes of Makkah agreed with the proposal. Their leaders signed this historical document, 'Halaf-il-Fudhool' (The Vow of Bounty) - also named as such since three of those tribal leaders were named Fadhl. They hung the document on the main door of Ka'bah.

BRITISH KNIGHTS FOLLOW SUIT IN THE 16TH CENTURY:

It is interesting to note that about 1000 years later the United Kingdom adopted this historical document. In the 16th century Britain, any person becoming a knight had to pledge his allegiance to the above mentioned four rules.

AN IMPORTANT TRUCE:

During Muhammad's youth, the Ka'bah was damaged by a flood. The local chiefs helped repair it. Now, the 'sacred' black stone had to be placed in its corner. Traditionally, this black stone is a meteorite. It had been used as a mark for pilgrims as a starting point to walk around the Ka'bah. Every tribe wanted the honor of fixing it. Heated arguments took place, and violence was about to break out. Then one of the leaders suggested finding an arbiter to resolve the matter. It was decided that whoever entered the Ka'bah first thing in the morning he would be the arbiter. Next morning, the first man to enter happened to be none else but Muhammad (S). The leaders screamed with joy, "Here is Ameen, here is Sadiq!" Muhammad (S) peacefully obviated a sure bloody feud. He laid his shawl on the floor, placed the black stone in the middle, and then he asked the chief of each tribe to hold the shawl at sides. They walked together to the assigned corner. Muhammad (S) then lifted the black stone and placed it where it belonged. A bloody and highly destructive battle had been avoided to the joy of all.

MARRIAGE:

There was a noble widow, a highly successful businesswoman in Makkah. Her name was Khadijah bint Khawailid. She used to send trade caravans to Syria and her business was flourishing. She heard of a man in Makkah, whose name was Muhammad. What a wonderful name -

'The praised one!' And the Makkans seldom called him by his first name. They referred to him by his titles "As-Sadiq" and "Al-Ameen." Khadijah requested this trustworthy and truthful man to lead her caravan. She sent her servant Maiysarah, to accompany him. The long trip turned out to be very successful and profitable. Maiysarah was incessantly showering laurels on Muhammad (S). He told Khadijah how intelligent, patient, hard working, and honest Muhammad (S) was. The prosperous and honored lady of Makkah was very impressed. She sent in a proposal for marriage through a lady friend. The young Prophet and his uncle Abu Talib gladly accepted. Khadijah was 40 and Muhammad (S) 25 at the time of their marriage. Later, after Khadijah's death, he married Ayesha. When asked about his character, Ayesha said: "MUHAMMAD'S CHARACTER WAS THE QUR'AN."

THE CALL TO PROPHETHOOD:

Like other Prophets, Muhammad, the exalted, was chosen by God. The time was right. The place was perfect. Human beings had advanced in learning through the ages, and civilizations had developed with time. The earlier Prophets were given messages for their times and their nations. Then, humanity grew up enough to receive the Final Message - The Final Word of God, for all, for all times. The time was so right that it could not have been more suitable. The Message to the Last Prophet could now be preserved, every word of it. This Word would remain modern for all times. Books could be easily written, saved on parchment and widely published in the 7th century. The Qur'an was written on deer skin by noble scribes according to the internal evidence in the Book itself. Means of communication had improved in the then known world.

PLACE AND PEOPLE:

No place could be better than Makkah to receive the Last Word of God. The city of Makkah was a center of trade caravans. It already had the widely revered First Symbolic House of Monotheism. The Ka'bah had been built by Prophet Ibrahim 2,500 years before. Being the loftiest and earliest Symbol of True Monotheism, it is a constant reminder to people that all mankind is One Community just as their Creator is One. The people of Makkah were respected in Arabia because they were guardians of the Sacred House. Makkah in the vast desert expanse was far removed from other civilizations. The people of the town were rugged and shrewd since they had to survive in a very formidable

natural and lawless environment. Very importantly, they had never been ruled by foreign powers, and therefore, they had all the qualities of a free nation. They were bold, strong, and straightforward. They always kept their word and would lay down their lives for it. If a tribe violated the amnesty given to someone by the other, one shout could fetch them to the battlefield. Dying in bed was a matter of shame for them while giving life in battle was highly regarded. Battles between tribes lasted through generations in the form of chain revenge ('Thaar'). Women were treated as means of providing pleasure to men. Birth of a male child was a festive occasion for the family and its tribe but the birth of a female child was considered a matter of shame since she would not become a strong fighter. Some Arabs would bury her alive.

81:8 When the little girl that was buried alive is made to ask -

81:9 For what crime she was slain.

Hospitality and generosity to guests was the cornerstone of their tradition. Even a stranger was welcomed with open arms and treated with utmost respect and kindness.

Only a few people in Makkah knew how to read and write. So, they relied on their memory for poetry, history, folklore and knowledge. This exercise sharpened their memories to an incredible extent. While the progeny of Prophet Isaac ruled Can'aan, the descendants of Prophet Ishmael in Arabia, according to Divine Plan, had been grooming and perfecting their language making it fit to receive Allah's Final Revelation. Poets, story-tellers, genealogists and good narrators enjoyed special distinction in the Arab society. Many of these qualities made Makkah the best place in the world to receive the Final Message.

We have briefly examined the good and bad traits in Arabian society. Prophet Muhammad knew that his society needed a drastic change. He used to do a lot of thinking about it never knowing until the Day of Revelation that the noble task would be eventually assigned to him.

29:48 For, (O Prophet) you were never able to read a book or Scripture before this (Qur'an), nor could you write anything with your own hand. Or else, they who try to disprove the Truth might have some cause to doubt it.

CONTEMPLATION:

Sometimes, he went out of the town to find solitude. Even now, there exists the Mountain of Light (Jabl-an-Noor), a few miles from Makkah. This mountain has a little cave called Hira. It is about 12 feet long and 6 feet wide. The Prophet (S) used to spend an occasional day there, contemplating and praying for guidance. He would then return to town and continue with business as usual. He helped his community more than ever. The Qur'an keeps the legend in proper perspective by stating that Allah found him searching for guidance and He granted it.

93:7 And He found you looking for guidance, and showed you the way.

WHEN MUHAMMAD (S) IS COMMISSIONED, 4/16/610:

It can be stated without exaggeration that April 16th, 610 CE was the most significant day in human history. He was still under 40 on that epoch-making day of 25th Ramadhan, April 16th, 610 CE. On this day, the unseen Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet with the first Message from Allah. As soon as he shared his experience with his noble wife, Khadijah, she immediately accepted the Revelation. She said from her heart, "You are loyal to your family, truthful and trustworthy. You always help the poor and needy, take care of the widows and orphans, are hospitable to your guest and comfort the grieved. Allah will never let you be unsuccessful."

DETERMINATION:

The enemies continued to pressure the Prophet's Uncle, Abu Talib, to stop supporting and sheltering his nephew. One day Abu Talib said to Muhammad, "O my* nephew! Do not place a burden on your Uncle that he cannot bear." He respectfully answered, "My dear Uncle! Even if they place the sun on my right hand and the moon on the left, I will not quit my Mission. Either Allah will carry it to success or I will lay my life in the noble pursuit." Abu Talib seeing his beloved nephew's resolve said, "My dear son, you can go ahead with your mission and I will grant you all my protection."

TEMPTATION:

When threats did not work, the opposing Quraishite leaders resorted to temptation. They said, "O Muhammad! We can lay treasures on your feet, get you married to the most beautiful woman in the country, make you our king; but stop delivering this Message." The Prophet answered,

"O Honorables ! I have no interest in worldly gains. Let me live the life of an ordinary man. At no cost will I quit the Mission entrusted upon me by my Creator."

HALEEMA & SHEEMA:

According to the customs of the times, Muhammad (S) was sent to be suckled and reared in the desert outside Makkah to become tough and eloquent. Hazrat Haleema Sa'dia suckled him for two years and continued rearing him until he was six. She had a daughter, Sheema, who was 7 years older than Muhammad. Sheema also took very good care of the little child. Later, even as the head of the State of Madinah, Muhammad (S) used to stand up in respect whenever he saw them, saying in loving emotions, "O My dear mother, O My dear sister, Welcome, most Welcome!" He used to spread his blanket and pillow for them to relax on and treated them most kindly and generously.

MARTIAL GAMES:

Later in Madinah, he used to fondly recall that in his childhood, he had learned swimming, horse riding, camel riding and archery in the desert.

QAIS BIN SAAEB MAKHZOOMI:

A long time business companion of Muhammad (S) states, "I know him better than you all as I have been his business companion. I have never seen a man as upright, truthful, honest and trustworthy as him."

IDOLS & ALTARS:

Even as a child, Muhammad (S) avoided vain activities. He declined to eat any animal sacrificed on idol altars and he never bowed to an idol.

CLOSE EARLY FRIENDS:

Muhammad (S) was one of the Hanifis since childhood. The exalted Prophet never was a pagan. He, along with many of his family and friends, followed DEEN-E HANIF, the Way of Ibrahim a.s. which was based on strict Monotheism and doing service to the community.

The followers of Deen-e Hanif were known as HANIFIS in and around Makkah and everywhere in Al-Hijaz.

“Hanifis” tried to follow the then known Prophet Ibrahim’s ‘Deen-e-Hanif’ (System of Life that rejected all falsehood and shunned idol worship).

No wonder, Muhammad (S) was called SADIQ (truthful) and AMIN (trustworthy) since he was very young.

Hanifis meant those who followed the Straight Path, helped people and detested all vice. Among them were Abdus Shams (later, Abdullah Abu Bakr), Hakeem bin Hazam, Dhamaad bin Sa’labah, Qais bin Saaeb, Mujahid bin Jubair, Usman bin Maz’oon, Zaid bin Umro and Abdullah bin Jahash, Khawailid Makhzoomi, Khadijah bint Khawailid. They were earnestly waiting for the advent of a Prophet as they had heard that it was foretold in the Scrolls of Abraham and Moses. All of these were Unitarians and had excellent character. There was much affinity among them, and history does not record a single objectionable incident in their lives. Some Hanifi Unitarians had died before Muhammad (S) was commissioned as a Prophet in 610 CE.

According to some historical records, the first chronicler of the exalted Prophet's battles and his biography was a Magian under the name Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yassar d.773 CE. He has also been mentioned as Jewish in some reports. The biography written by Ibn Ishaq had been lost soon after it was written. Ibn Hisham collected his memoirs and wrote his own biography of Muhammad (S). [Ibn Ishaq's book has re-emerged in the late 20th century as if from a magician's hat!]

A biography by Ibn Hisham d.840 CE, titled ‘Seerat-un-Nabi’, is based on hearsay more than 50 years after Ibn Ishaq. His stratagem was similar to others. He would narrate some lines complimentary to the Prophet (S) in order to establish credibility and then follow with derogatory lines and paras. Most of his sources were Jewish and Magian.

Imam Malik had called Muhammad bin Ishaq (Ibn Ishaq) a liar. Between Muhammad bin Ishaq and the first available derivation from his work by Ibn Hisham, all reporters were Zoroastrians and Jews such as Ziyad Al-Bakai, Muslimatil Abrash and Hameed Razi. Also there was Waqidi, a hard-boiled Magian and reputedly the biggest liar of the times (Mazhabi Dastanain aur Unki Haqeeqat by Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Kandhalwi d.1970).

Surprisingly, it is a little known fact the Qur'an preserves a few verses from the Scrolls of Abraham in Surah An-Najm.

UMM JAMIL:

Umm Jamil, the wife of Prophet Muhammad's Uncle* Abi Lahab, used to spread thorny bushes on the doorstep of the Prophet at night. One morning, he found the doorstep clean. Instead of being happy, he became concerned and asked about her well-being. Upon learning that she was sick, he visited her house and inquired about her condition and any needs she might have.

UMM AIMON BARAKAH:

She was a house-maid of the Prophet's father, Abdullah. She was also the midwife of the Prophet's mother, Amena bint Wahab. Muhammad never forgot her kindness and treated her as a mother throughout his life.

PATIENCE:

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Abi Hamsa states that before being commissioned as a Prophet, Muhammad (S) and he were making a business deal. Abdullah promised to return in a short while, but forgot to do so. He recalled the promise the next morning and came back. He was astonished to find Muhammad (S) waiting there. Abi Hamsa reports that Muhammad did not even frown. Seeing him embarrassed, he only said, "Never mind, it only caused me a little inconvenience."

MIGRATION – HIJRAH 622 CE:

Madinah is a town about 210 miles north of Makkah on the western coast of today's Saudi Arabia. The Prophet (S) had advised some Makkans to migrate to Ethiopia (615 CE) and later to Madinah (622 CE). Ethiopia's Christian King Negus (Najashi) was a kind-hearted man. He saw the common grounds about belief in Jesus and Mary between Muslims and Christians. He was also highly impressed by the Prophet's noble teachings. Negus sheltered Muslims and soon embraced Islam. During the previous 12 years, some people of Madinah had embraced Islam as well. The Muslims of Madinah had been inviting the exalted Prophet to move to their town. It was in the year 622 CE when Muhammad (S) made his move to Madinah after most other Muslims had safely

emigrated. This was the most influential migration in history since it was to change the future of humanity. Traveling 210 miles on camel-back usually took one week. The exalted Prophet rode to Madinah on camel-back with Hazrat Abu Bakr as his companion on the other camel. The people of Madinah welcomed the Prophet with great joy. Men, women and children all were extremely delighted. The Day of Hijrah, or Migration, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. The exalted Prophet almost in a blink of an eye brought peace to Madinah. He ended tribal warfare and signed peace treaties with the local tribes, the Jews and the Bedouins. The previous name of this blessed township was 'Yathrib'. From then on, it came to be known as Madinah-tun-Nabi (Town of the Prophet), and later simply Madinah.

THE STRENGTH OF CONVICTION

The Cave of Thaur: When the Prophet was migrating from Makkah to Madinah along with Hazrat Abu Bakr, their enemies were in hot pursuit, and the two had to hide in a cave. When he heard the approaching enemy, Abu Bakr became worried. The Prophet (S) said, "Grieve not. Allah is with us." [9:40] The enemies finding the hill difficult to climb by a 52 year old Muhammad, turned away without exploring the cave.

RECEPTION:

The people of Madinah were zealously waiting for the arrival of the exalted Prophet and used to mount the tops of their houses. When they saw two camels on the horizon one day, the entire town went ecstatic. Men, women and children were dancing and singing in joy. Every family was keen to host him but the camels sat down at the house of one of the most loyal companions, Hazrat Abu Ayub Ansari.

AN ORDINARY LABORER:

When the Masjid Nabawi was being built in Madinah, the noble companions requested the Prophet (S) to take rest and supervise the construction. However, the Prophet (S) continuously worked with his companions like an ordinary laborer picking up stones, bricks, and wood, mud and fixing them.

PRAGMATISM

The Laws of Nature: An infant son of the Prophet (S), Ibrahim, died in Madinah. Incidentally, a solar eclipse occurred the next day. People

thought that even the heavens were mourning his death. Some unbelievers were so impressed that they rushed in to embrace Islam. Most people under the circumstances would have sought unfair advantage of the situation, but the exalted Prophet was not the one to exploit the situation. He said, "Solar and lunar eclipses happen according to the laws of Nature. The eclipse has nothing to do with the death of my son."

FORBEARANCE:

The Prophet went to meet with a group of people and preach Islam. The infamous hypocrite Abdullah bin Ubbi who had desired to be the king of 'Yathrib' rudely said, "Do not come to us even to preach the truth." Some of the young and strong companions became furious, but the exalted Prophet told them to calm down and not react. Everyone then quietly turned back.

THE PATROLLING SOLDIER:

Muslims were trying to settle in Madinah but they were surrounded by enemies. Whenever the danger was at its height, the Prophet himself used to patrol on his horse at nights while the noble companions always wanted the honor.

NO RAIDS:

The Prophet sent Hazrat Abdullah bin Jahash with 12 men on a reconnaissance mission near Makkah. The objective was to observe any signs of hostile activity from the enemy. They found a richly loaded Makkan caravan on the way. Hazrat Abdullah Makhzoomi attacked the caravan and brought back with him many valuables. He thought that the Prophet (S) would applaud him for the feat, but instead, he scolded him for raiding peaceful citizens. He admonished that the days of Jahiliyyah (Age of Ignorance) were over. Then he ordered Abdullah to return all "booty" right away. Until then such raids for winning booty were a very common practice in Arabia.

DEFENSIVE BATTLES:

Almost all battles between Muslims and the opposing Makkans took place close to Madinah, indicating that the enemy was always the aggressor. The only exception was the unexpected Battle of 'Hunain' after the conquest of Makkah in 7 AH, when Muslims were ambushed

by a tribe as they were peacefully returning home without shedding a drop of blood.

"BADR", NATURAL RESOURCES REMAIN OPEN:

The Makkans launched an attack on Madinah with heavily equipped 1,000 foot-soldiers, archers and 100 horsemen and camels on 12 Ramadhan 2 AH. The Muslims were only an ill-equipped 313 with two horses. After consulting with the noble companions, the Prophet decided to halt the enemy southward at a place 'Badr'. The two armies met at Badr, 70 miles south of Madinah (140 miles north of Makkah). The Prophet made the defense plans according to the Qur'anic command of mutual consultation. The strategy required Muslims to secure the water wells before the enemy did. However, the Prophet announced to the Makkans that there would be no water-blockade and that anyone could safely come through to fetch water. History is unable to provide a single instance of such benevolence during war. [Badr 3:123]

NO DISFIGUREMENT:

Suhail bin Umro used to deliver fiery speeches against the Prophet. He was captured at the Battle of Badr. Some companions suggested that his frontal teeth be extracted in order to impair his speech but the exalted Prophet strongly forbade them saying, "I fear Allah's law of requital." He added that no person or dead body, not even an animal, would be disfigured after the advent of Islam.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY:

Seventy opponents were taken captive at the Battle of Badr and none of them was killed, tortured or enslaved. The rich paid ransom and the poor were released by way of compassion. The educated among the captives each would teach ten Muslims to read and write in order to attain freedom. [47:4]

Following the practical example, with one stroke of pen, Muhammad (S) abolished slavery citing the Qur'an.

17:70 Surely, We have conferred dignity on children of Adam (as a birth right, regardless of where the child is born) ….,

49:13 O Mankind! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may recognize one another. Certainly, the most honored among you in the Sight of God is the one who is best in conduct. God is Knower, Aware.

WHEN THE BATTLE LAYS DOWN ITS WEAPONS:

47:4 If you meet the disbelievers in battle, strike at their command centers, until you have subdued them, then, bind them firmly. And thereafter, there must be an act of kindness or ransom when the battle lays down its weapons. ….. [8:37, 38:40. Free the captives as an act of kindness or ransom, such as in exchange for your men in their captivity. There is no third option.]

NO TO BLIND FAITH & TRUST:

A Bedouin came to meet with the Prophet (S) and left his camel to graze around. The Prophet looked at him with curiosity. The Bedouin asked, "O Rasulullah! Can I leave the camel alone and put my trust in Allah?" He answered, "Tie your camel first, and then trust in Allah."

COURAGE:

One day, the Prophet was resting under a shady tree in an isolated little valley. An opponent came and un-shielding his sword, said, "O Muhammad! Tell me who can save you from me." The Prophet calmly replied, "Allah!" The man got stunned and started trembling. The Prophet (S) picked up his fallen sword and asked, "Now who can save you from me?" The man said, "None." The Prophet asked, "Why don't you say what I had said?" The man remained dumbfounded for a few moments and then uttered the 'Shahadah' (There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Messenger).

SIMPLICITY:

At the wedding of his beloved daughter Fatima with Hazrat Ali, the exalted Prophet kept things very simple. An iron shield of defense, a worn out Yemeni bed-sheet, and a sheep skin were considered sufficient as marital gifts from the groom. The Prophet gave the couple some items as gifts: a wooden cot with a mattress filled with date leaves, a water bottle made of leather, a leather water carrier, two wheat grinders of stone, and two water containers made of clay. A few companions hosted the milk and date dinner.

COMPASSION FOR WOMEN:

Hindah bint Waleed, wife of Abu Sufyan, was a sworn enemy of Islam and the Prophet. During the Battle of Uhud, Hazrat Abu Dajanah had his sword raised over the heavily armed combatant Hindah's head, but the Prophet (S) gestured to him and Hazrat Abu Dajanah withdrew his sword from her. "We do not hurt women," said the Prophet.

FORGIVENESS:

Muhammad (S) went to Taif to convey the Message to the residents of the town. The leaders told some boys to mock him and throw stones at him. The Prophet was bleeding, and the blood trickled and clotted in his shoes. Whenever he tried to sit down in weakness, the scoundrels made him stand up and walk again. The Prophet's adopted son, Zaid bin Haarisa, asked him to pray against the Taifites. The Prophet (S) refused, saying, "If not these, their generations will come to believe in the Truth."

PRAYING FOR AGGRESSORS:

The Makkans came back in 3 AH to avenge their defeat at Badr in 2 AH. During the hard-fought Battle of Uhud when both sides were suffering heavy casualties, the exalted Prophet was heard praying, "O My Sustainer! Forgive my people since they know not."

MOURNING:

The Prophet's dearest Uncle, Hazrat Hamza, was a very prominent and popular figure in Makkah and Madinah. He became a martyr in the Battle of Uhud. The Prophet saw numerous women engaged in loud mourning at the door of Hazrat Hamza's house. He said, "From this day, it is not permissible for anyone to mourn aloud."

KEEPING THE PLEDGE:

As head of the state, the Prophet had granted amnesty to a formerly aggressive tribe. The tribe broke their pledge and robbed some of the noble companions. A skirmish took place in which two of the tribesmen were killed. When the incidence came to his notice, the exalted Prophet expressed his displeasure. The companions tried to explain the tribe's breech of pledge, but he said that the companions must have forgiven them. "We are the ones who always keep our pledge", said the Prophet. Then he ordered Muslims to pay to the tribe an equitable ransom for the

slain men. Muslims never fought any people until a peace treaty was first revoked by both parties.

THE NOBLEST MISSION STATEMENT EVER:

At the outset of the call to the Prophetic office, the exalted Muhammad announced the highest and the noblest Mission Statement: "We will establish a State in which a beautiful young woman laden with jewelry will be able to travel alone from Yemen to Busra (in Syria, about 2000 miles). Yet, she will have no fear but the fear of Allah." This meant that in the Muslim Empire, the life, honor, and property of all citizens would be safe. It promised peace and rule of law in the society beginning with discipline in the hearts. The exalted Prophet achieved this lofty mission within his lifetime!

COUNTENANCE:

A group of nomads was visiting Madinah. The exalted Prophet bought some merchandise from them, told them to wait a few moments, and rode away. The tribal men worried for the price but an elderly woman among them said, “Such can only be the face of a truthful man.” Surely, Muhammad (S) was back with the full price of the bargain in a few moments.

Another group of 17 nomads was conducting business in the bazaar of Madinah. Muhammad (S) and his companions were engaged with them in barter. Suddenly, the leader of the group announced, “We came here for business but never expected to see a most gentle and handsome countenance. Can we extend our allegiance to Muhammad?”

RECONNAISSANCE:

One night, there was a rumor in Madinah that the Roman governor from north was preparing to surround the town with his forces. The residents became apprehensive, but the Prophet did not waste time in harnessing his horse. He mounted the bare horse and went around the whole town. Then he calmed the residents by telling them that there were no forces and, so, there was no reason for alarm.

HUMILITY:

One evening, the noble companions were sitting on a blanket waiting for the Prophet to step out of his home. All of them stood up in respect as he

came. The Prophet said, “Do not stand up for me as others do for their kings.”

SON OF AMENA:

A man traveled some distance to visit the exalted Prophet for the first time. Approaching the Prophet, he started trembling. He said, “Look, I am an ordinary man, the son of an ordinary Quraishi woman who used to save and eat dried meat.”

GUARDS:

Home or travel, the Prophet never had a body guard. No one ever stood at his house as a watchman. Delegations from Ethiopia, Syria, Jerusalem and Constantinople of Byzantium, Egypt, Persia and Yemen used to visit him in Madinah. They kept looking for guards outside the Prophet’s Office (Masjid) and a decorated throne inside. Many of them remarked that they had never seen an “emperor” like him.

A COMMON MAN:

The visitors from abroad could not tell Muhammad apart from the throngs of his companions. His attire, demeanor, and seating carried no distinction. Some of them could recognize Muhammad (S) only by his dignified smile, behavior, and mannerism.

ALL MUST BE SEATED FIRST:

The Prophet always made sure that everyone was seated before him. He disliked having a special place and sat wherever space was available. A rich man had a host of slaves and wanted them to keep standing before him. The exalted Prophet admonished people, “One who likes people to keep standing before him, should find his abode in the hellfire.”

TESTIMONY BY A FORMER ADVERSARY:

When Heraclius, the powerful Byzantine Emperor, was in Jerusalem, he invited some Arab traders to his court. He asked Abu Sufyan, “Muhammad has lived a whole life among you. Did you ever experience a lie from him?” Abu Sufyan’s answer was brief and to the point, “No, never!”

A DEDICATED HOST:

People used to visit him day and night. He had guests almost everyday at dinner. The Prophet (S) took special delight in serving his guests. King Negus (Najashi) of Ethiopia sent some ambassadors to Madinah. The king had granted asylum to many early Muslims in 615 CE. The noble companions were trying to outdo each other hosting the guests of honor. The exalted Prophet stayed ahead of all, saying, "These people had relieved the persecuted Muslims, therefore I must serve them personally."

MUHAMMAD (S) NEVER INJURED ANYONE:

Although the Prophet invariably commanded his forces from the forefront and was always in the thick of the battle, he did not injure a single person in his life. Abu Makhnif, a staunch enemy, faced the exalted Prophet at the Battle of Uhud. The Prophet touched his neck with his spear. Abu Makhnif rode yelling and screaming all the way to Makkah. People taunted him since there was no visible wound or bleeding at all. He said, "By God! What do you know? It was the touch of Muhammad."

MAGNANIMITY:

A man was arrested for trying to ambush the Prophet. He told the companions to set him free. The Prophet never took revenge for verbal or physical attacks on his person.

POISONING:

A Jewish woman of Khyber, Zainab, wife of Sallaam bin Mushkam, invited the Prophet and some companions to dinner but poisoned the meals. The Prophet ate one morsel and quit. She was arrested and feared for her life. The Prophet asked her why she had done it. She responded, "In order to kill you." The Prophet forgave her since he never used to avenge for personal reasons. Hazrat Bashar bin Barar ate his fill and died of the poison the next day. The woman was then punished according to the law of just recompense.

GENEROSITY:

The exalted Prophet never saved anything for the next day. He could not sleep until he had given away everything in charity. Even on the day he died, he was seen restless since there were some coins at home. He told

his wife to bring those coins and give them away in charity. Then, all restlessness vanished and he was calm as usual.

'ADI BIN HATIM TAI:

He was a Christian leader and came with a delegation. A poor woman intervened and asked the Prophet to listen to her in privacy. He immediately stood up, asked people to be excused, and then listened to her with patience. 'Adi said, "I had come to see if Muhammad was a king or a Prophet. Now I know that he is a truthful Prophet of God." 'Adi embraced Islam right away.

SEEKING OFFICE:

The exalted Prophet admonished people not to covet government office unless someone had a special skill that was not known. Two men came along with Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari and requested the Prophet for government office. He asked Abu Musa, "What do you have to say?" He replied, "I did not know that they had come for this purpose." The Prophet said, "We do not grant office to those who covet it." Then he appointed Abu Musa, a close companion, as the governor of Yemen.

NOMINATION:

How then did people become government officers? There was no campaigning. The Prophet used to convene the SHURA (Advisory Council) that would nominate the most suited person for an office. If the nominee agreed, a vote of confidence from the SHURA and common people gathered in the Masjid was required. For high offices, a nominee also required to take an oath of allegiance from the people of the town. Men and women, both, were eligible for any office and for granting the vote of confidence.

EDUCATION:

Illiteracy was extremely common in Arabia. Before Hijrah, only 23 men in Makkah could read and write. The exalted Prophet made the attainment of knowledge incumbent on every Muslim man and woman. He said, "Gain knowledge even if it is in China." The unlettered Prophet himself learned to read and write as soon as Allah commissioned him to the Prophetic Office.

29:48 For, (O Prophet) you were never able to read a book or Scripture before this (Qur'an), nor could you write anything with your own hand. Or else, they who try to disprove the Truth might have some cause to doubt it.

He commanded some noble companions to learn Hebrew so that Jewish documents and treaties could be read first hand.

PHYSICIANS:

The Prophet (S) set up a board of experts to watch over practicing physicians. An incompetent physician that grossly deviated from the norms of practice, was held accountable for damages done to his patients.

UNITY OF MANKIND:

From the very beginning, the Prophet (S) had declared that all humans are equal regardless of color, ethnicity, tribe, and geography and that every child of Adam is worthy of honor.

17:70 Surely, We have conferred dignity on children of Adam (as a birth right, regardless of where the child is born) ……
The funeral procession of a Jew passed by and the Prophet stood up in respect. Some people said that it was the funeral of a non-Muslim. He said, "So what? He was a human being."

WOMEN RIGHTS:

Women in Arabia, and all over the world had no rights. They were seen only as objects of pleasure. Those captured in tribal raids used to be taken as concubines. The Prophet said, "Allah created all men and women free. How can you hold them in bondage?" Women attained all human rights in the State of Madinah such as consent for marriage, attaining education, working according to their skills and choice, owning property, having an equitable share in a deceased's will, and the right to divorce etc.

Please recall that the Christian Church at the Conference of Nicea in 325 CE and later were still asking questions:

1. Is woman a human?
2. Does she have a soul?

3. Will she be resurrected in the afterlife?

The Qur'an decided all matters instantly.

2:228 ….. Women, in all equity, have rights similar to men. …..

HUDAIBIYYAH:

This famous peace treaty between Muslims and the opposing Makkans was under way when some Makkans tried to assassinate the Prophet's ambassador, Hazrat Khirash bin Umayyah, and killed the Prophet's camel he was riding. Then the Quraish sent an armed party towards Muslims but the Muslims arrested them. When they were presented before the exalted Prophet, he unconditionally forgave them and set them free.

EVEN BLOODY AGGRESSION IS FORGIVEN

Ghatfaan: Zi Qru was a grassy land where the camels of the exalted Prophet and his companions used to graze. Several men from the Ghatfaan tribe raided the pasture, killed Hazrat Abu Zar Ghaffari's son who was standing guard, and abducted his wife and 20 camels. Hazrat Salma bin Ukoo', an expert archer followed the aggressors and he, along with his men, captured and bound the assailants. Then he rushed to the Prophet with the report that he had the aggressors in custody right on the pasture keeping water supplies out of their reach. You can imagine what such cruel aggressors would expect? The exalted Prophet told Hazrat Salma bin Ukoo', "When you overcome an enemy, let forgiveness take the lead."

THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH JAN 630 CE, RAMADHAN 8 AH - AND GENERAL AMNESTY:

During the previous 2 years of relative peace, Quraish, the pagans of Makkah, were closely watching the long strides Islam was making. The System of the Government of Madinah and the equitable social life became a magnet for hearts. People were entering the blessed fold of Islam in throngs. The pagan leaders dreaded human equality and absolute justice for all. Willfully and repeatedly they violated the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, attacked small bands of peaceful Muslims and ultimately revoked it in writing. As Head of the State of Madinah, the Prophet had no choice, but to attack Makkah. With 10,000 soldiers, he

marched to Makkah in 630 CE. More and more Muslims joined the caravan on the way to Makkah until the final count was estimated to be 100,000. Please note that in that blessed era, every able-bodied Muslim man and woman used to serve as a soldier in the defense of the Islamic State. There was no standing army as such. The Makkans were taken aback! The city was captured without any bloodshed. The exalted Prophet rode on his camel through the gate of the city while his opponents trembled in fear. Instead of showing any semblance of royal pride, he kept his head bowed in humility. He asked the Makkans what they expected. They responded, “We have done extreme wrongs to you, your family and your followers. We deserve what we deserve. But you are a gentle soul, a clement brother and we can expect gentle treatment from you.” The exalted Prophet immediately declared a general, unconditional amnesty for all. He said, "This day there is no blame on you. You are free, free to go about." Upon hearing this, everyone was stunned in amazement! Almost instantly, all of Makkah embraced Islam.
Among those Makkans, there were people who had driven Muhammad (S), his family and companions out of their homes. There were those who had looted their property and killed numerous Muslims. They had severely persecuted the Prophet and Muslim men and women. They had tried their utmost to destroy Islam and Muslims. Yet the merciful Prophet tells them, "This day there is no blame on you. You are free to go about." All of human history will fail to cite one example of clemency like this.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:

In a few days, the Muslims led by Muhammad (S), returned to Madinah. The unexpected Battle of Hunayn on the way back has been mentioned previously. However, in the following few months most of the tribes, clans, and people in the Arabian Peninsula had embraced Islam. Since "No Compulsion in Religion" is the Law (2:256), most of the Jews, Christians and some Idolaters stuck to their old ways. The State of Madinah became a peaceful pluralistic society with a beautiful example of unity in diversity. A young beautiful woman laden in jewelry could travel anywhere in the State and she had no fear but the fear of Allah. “The Lord's Kingdom” had been established on earth for the first time ever in history.

Hazrat Umar had been appointed as the Chief Justice of the State, but after one year he resigned saying, "I have not had a single case brought to my court." Such was the transformation of the hearts among the previously violent Arabs! Soon, people used to travel distances to find someone to accept charity but without success.

The Final Messenger To All Humanity For All Times:

33:40 Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is God's Messenger and the closing seal of all Prophets. God is Knower of all things.

Prophet Muhammad Is The Most Excellent Example For Us:

33:21 In the Messenger of God you have a most excellent example, for him who rests his hope in God and the Last Day, and remembers His commands much. [60:4]

2:146 Those to whom We gave the scripture before, recognize this (revelation) as they recognize their own children but, most certainly, some of them (their scholars) conceal the truth which they themselves know.
[ONCE AGAIN: The advent of Prophet Muhammad from the Ishmaelite descendants of Abraham has been foretold in the Bible. Genesis 21:13-18. Gospel of John 14:16, 15:26, 16:7. See QXP 2:125. Historically, the Gospel of Saint Barnabas, which was accepted and widely read in the churches, had 'Muhammad' in the exact Arabic form. But Pope Gelasius banned that Gospel in 496 CE for finding the Arabic name distasteful. It was only in the 16th century when the Italian translation of Barnabas was discovered in Vienna, Austria. But, obviously, translations can never be as reliable as the original text.]

2:252 These are God's revelations that We recite to you in absolute truth. And you (O Muhammad) are certainly one of the Messengers.

The honored Messengers of God, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were descendants of the Patriarch, Abraham. Prophet Jacob, the grandson of Abraham was also called Israel. Jews are known as Israelites in reference to Jacob. 'Imran (Amram) is the name of the father of Moses and Aaron, and also of a branch among Israelites. Mary, the mother of Jesus, belonged to the progeny of 'Imran. She was a descendant of Prophet

Aaron. The Qur'an confirms only the Divine origination of the Bible, but it strongly points to the extensive human touch in the Old & New Testaments. (2:75, 2:78-79, 2:101, 3:70-71, 3:78, 3:186-187, 5:13, 5:41, 6:91, 9:31).

“MUHAMMADANISM” IS A MISNOMER

There is no human worship in Islam.

3:144 Muhammad is only a Messenger. The Messengers before him have passed on. So, if he died or were slain, would you turn about on your heels? But anyone who turns about his heels, would not, in the least, harm God. And God will soon reward those who remain appreciative (for the guidance).
[The System the Prophet has established is to become a beacon of light for all humanity. The believers will reap the fruit of the Benevolent System here and, then, get rewarded in the Hereafter. 3:101, 3:185, 35:10]

18:110 Say (O Prophet), "I am only a human like you. It is revealed to me that your God is only One God. So, whoever looks forward to meeting with His Sustainer, let him do works that help others and ascribe no partners in the service of his Sustainer.”

41:6 (O Prophet) say to them, "I am only a human being like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is one and the same; the One and only God. So, take the straight path to Him and seek His forgiveness. There is great loss for those who choose gods besides God.

7:184 Has it never occurred to them that there is no madness whatsoever in their fellow-man? He has lived a whole life among you (10:16). He is only a plain warner.

We Made This Qur’an Easy To Understand:

19:97 And only to this end We have made this (Qur’an) easy to understand in your own tongue (O Prophet). That you might convey thereby glad news to the righteous and warn people given to futile disputation.

44:58 Certainly, (O Prophet) We have made this Qur’an easy in your tongue, in order that they may take it to heart. [69:40]

2:119 We have sent you (O Prophet) with the Decisive Truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner. But you will not be questioned about the companions of the blazing fire.

Jesus Gives News Of A Messenger (Ahmad) To Come:

61:6 (The same happened when) Jesus son of Mary said, "O Children of Israel! I am a Messenger of God to you. I confirm (the truth in) the Torah, and give you the good news of a Messenger to come after me whose name shall be Ahmad (The praised One)." But when he does come to them with self-evident truth, the People of the Scripture will say, "This is obvious magic (a spellbinding utterance)." [Gospel of John: 14:16, 15:26, 16:7 Paracletos = Comforter, from original Greek Periclytos = The praised one. In Aramaic, Mawhamana = The praised one]

17:79 (As head of the state, you shall commit yourself to extra endeavor.) You shall even contemplate and work part of the night, from sunset to the darkness of night. (And your companions shall join you in this endeavor as needed 73:2-3). Soon, your Lord will raise you to a highly honored, praiseworthy station. [Maqaam-am-Mahmooda = Praiseworthy station that will be obvious to the friend and foe alike]

Surah 73 – Al-Muzammil – The Great Caravan Leader: 'Zameel' = A close companion. 'Tazmeel' = Selecting the best companions. Al-Muzzammil denotes the most competent selector of virtuous human beings. He admits the best into his company and takes them along toward a Noble Mission. He is a great leader.

73:1 O You (Prophet) the great selector of companions, the best caravan leader!

73:5 We are charging you with a substantial declaration (a lofty mission).

Surah 74 – Al-Muddaththir – Founder Of The Benevolent Order: Muddaththir signifies a man who sets things in order beyond regional and spatial boundaries. It also indicates a man of impeccable character. In addition, it refers to a fearless rider who jumps upon a moving horse. Keeping all these meanings in mind Al-Muddaththir is the title of Muhammad (S) – A man of flawless character who has been entrusted with setting the house of humanity to order. And He will do it fast (jumping on the moving horse). The matchless personality of the exalted Prophet was entrusted with establishing a most Benevolent Social Order in the world. He achieved the results with lightening speed and the entire humanity since then has been consciously or unconsciously moving along with the Qur'anic Principles.

74:1 O You (Prophet) founder of the most Benevolent Order!

74:3 Establish the greatness of your Lord on earth!

The Prophet's Noble Companions:

8:63 God has brought together the hearts of the believers. If you (O Messenger) had spent all that is on earth, you could not have produced that affection, but God has done it. (The Divine Ideology has unified the believers.) He is Almighty, Wise.

9:100 The foremost among the emigrants and the helpers, as well as those who followed them in noble deeds: God's will is in harmony with them and their will in harmony with Him. He has made ready for them the evergreen Gardens, wherein they will abide eternally. This is the Supreme Triumph. [*Muhaajireen* = Emigrants (from Makkah). *Ansaar* = Those who hosted them (in Madinah). *Radhi-Allahu 'anhum wa radhu 'Anh* also translates as, "God is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him."]

9:128 (All humanity must realize that) there has come to you a Messenger one of your own who feels your burden. He is full of concern for your betterment, and for those who attain belief, he is very compassionate, merciful.

48:18 God was pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you (O Messenger) under that shady tree. For, He knew what was in their hearts, and so He sent down upon them inner peace, and rewarded them by opening the gates to a swift victory. [48:10]

48:29 Muhammad is God's Messenger. And those who are with him are stern towards the rejecters of truth, and full of compassion towards one another. You can see them bowing (to commands), adoring (Him), as they seek God's bounty and Acceptance. Their signs (of belief) are on their faces, the effects of adoration……

49:10 The believers are but a single Brotherhood. So, make peace between your brothers and sisters. And be mindful of God so that you may attain mercy. [They are members of one family, brothers and sisters to one another.]

Emphasis On Writing:

Writing and letters had existed much before Prophet Muhammad but now the books could be written and preserved on deer skin parchment.

2:282 O You who have chosen to be graced with belief! When you transact a loan for any period, you shall write it down. An impartial scribe shall do the writing. No scribe shall decline to perform this duty, and write as God has taught him.

2:180 Regarding proper dispensation of property, it is prescribed for you, before death approaches any of you, and he is leaving behind much wealth, that he set up a (written) will for parents and family in a decent, equitable manner. This is a binding duty on the upright.

68:1 N. Noon. The Inkpot and the Pen, and all that they write, stand witness. (The high domain of knowledge will bear out that).
It is this pen and writing skill with which human beings are blessed that allowed the Qur'an to be vastly published and perfectly preserved word by word.

Divine Kingdom On Earth:

5:3 This Day, I have perfected your Deen (Law) for you, completed My favor upon you, and chosen for you AI-Islam (Submission to God) as the System of Life.

21:107 And thus, (O Prophet) We have sent you as a mercy for the worlds.

74:3 Establish the greatness of your Lord on earth!

The Closing Seal Of God's Prophets And Messengers:

Having perfected the Deen, it is quite natural that Prophet Muhammad was the Closing Seal of all Prophets.

33:40 Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is God's Messenger and the Closing Seal of all Prophets. God is Knower of all things.

The Man Of The Noblest Character Departs:

Prophet Muhammad (S) enjoyed great health all his life and lived a very active life. It was a tiring day in 632 when he developed some shortness of breath, chest pain and fever. The greatest man ever to set foot on earth calmly departed after a brief febrile illness, probably pneumonia, at his residence.

His Last Words:

"Allahumma Rafiq-il-A'la" (Allah is the Superior Companion). Even in his last words the Prophet (S) left for us a remarkable legacy about our relationship with the Almighty.

He is the A'la Companion while we humans are His lesser 'adna' companions.

CHAPTER - 27c

Why Should We Know Muhammad?

We must, because he was by far the most remarkable and the most influential man that ever set foot on this earth. If we do not know him, we will remain oblivious to what phenomenal potential we as humans are endowed with and how this potential can be actualized.

He preached a most glorious System of Life, founded a state, built a nation, set up a moral code, initiated countless social and political reforms, set forth a dynamic and powerful society, and revolutionized human thought and behavior for all times to come. And he accomplished all these wonders in an astonishingly short span of under 23 years!

When Muhammad died in 632 CE, the whole Arabia had changed from paganism and idol worship to the devotion of One True God, from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion, from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety, from violence to tranquility, from lawlessness and anarchy to orderly living, from moral bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence. History has never known such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since.

He was a most versatile personality, a social reformer, a moral guide, a political thinker, a military genius, a superb administrator, a faithful friend, an honest and successful merchant, an ideal neighbor, a wonderful companion, a devoted husband, a loving father, and a farsighted, inspiring leader. And he was a model of perfection in each of these areas.

Yes, there have been other great leaders in the world. But none combines so many qualities to such an amazing level of perfection as did Muhammad. The lives and teachings of other great figures in history are shrouded in the mist of time and legend. There is so much speculation about the time and place of their birth, the mode and style of their lives, the nature and detail of their teachings that it is impossible for humanity today to reconstruct accurately and precisely the personalities and teachings of those great figures. Not so with this man, Muhammad. Not only was he born in the fullest blaze of recorded history, but every detail

of his private and public life, of his actions and utterances, has been accurately documented and preserved to our day in one simple Book, the Quran.

Muhammad not only preached the most wonderful ideas, but also successfully translated each one of them into action. At the time of his death his teachings were not mere precepts and ideas straining for fulfillment. They had become the very core of life of tens of thousands of perfectly trained individuals. In a few decades, his followers had established the greatest empire in history. Such was the prosperity and peace in this empire that it was almost impossible to find a single person worthy of receiving alms and charity. A young woman could travel alone hundreds of miles without any fear but the fear of God. At what other time or place and in relation to what other political, social, religious system, philosophy or ideology - did the world ever witness such a perfectly astounding phenomenon? The answer is, NEVER AND NOWHERE!

In spite of the phenomenal success that crowned his success, he did not for a moment claim to be anything but only a human being who was chosen and ordained by the Creator to be a teacher of truth to mankind and be a complete model and pattern for their actions. He was a man with a noble and exalted Mission - and his unique Mission was to unite humanity under One God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living in accordance with the Command of God.

Today, after the lapse of some 1,400 years, the life and teachings of Muhammad have survived without the slightest loss, alteration or interpolation. Today they offer the same undying hope for treating mankind's many ills as they did when Prophet Muhammad was alive. This is our honest claim and this is the inescapable conclusion forced upon us by the critical and unbiased study of the dynamics of human history.

As thinking, sensitive, concerned human beings, we owe it to ourselves to stop for one brief moment and ask, "Could it be that these statements, extraordinary as they sound, are really true? Supposing they are really true and we did not know this man, Muhammad or hear about his teachings - Or did not know him well enough to be able to benefit from his guidance and example. Is it not time we responded to this

tremendous challenge and made some effort to know this man?" It will cost us nothing but it may well prove to be the beginning of a brand new vibrant era in our lives.

Come! Let us make a new discovery, know this wonderful man Muhammad, the like of whom never walked this earth, whose example can change our lives and our world for the better.

This is the appropriate time to study a brief time-line of the incredible man called Muhammad of Arabia.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

570 CE	:	Muhammad, the exalted, born in Makkah. His father, Abdullah dies before the Prophet is born.
576	:	Mother Amena dies. Grandfather Abdul Muttalib becomes the guardian.
578	:	Grandfather dies. Abu Talib, a paternal uncle, assumes guardianship.
582	:	First trading journey to Syria with Abu Talib.
595	:	Marriage to Khadijah r.a.
605	:	Muhammad (S) helps rebuild Ka'bah after a flood.
610	:	Angel Gabriel visits Muhammad (S) - The First Revelation
613	:	The Message of Islam begins reaching the community. Persecution of Muslims begins.
615	:	The Prophet orders some Muslims to migrate to Ethiopia-Abyssinia.
617	:	Persecution increases. The Prophet (S) and his followers are boycotted by Makkans. Many people of the far away town (210 miles North) Madinah embrace Islam and invite the Prophet and his followers to live among them.
619	:	Khadijah and Abu Talib die.
622	:	The Prophet migrates to Madinah. Islamic State established. New Constitution declared.
623	:	The Prophet (S) marries Ayesha r.a.
624	:	The Battle of Badr - The Turning Point
626	:	The Battle of Uhud
627	:	The Battle of the Trench or Clans (Khandaq or Ahzab)
628	:	The Treaty of Hudaibiyah
628	:	Invitation to Emperors
630	:	Conquest of Makkah
632	:	Last pilgrimage to Makkah and the Farewell Address
632	:	The greatest man departs

This is where Shabbir Ahmed respectfully ends this book.